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MEMOIR

OF

PRISCILLA GURNEY.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM AND FREDERICK G. CASH,
BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT.

MEMOIR

OF

PRISCILLA GURNEY.

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EDITED BY

SUSANNA CORDER.

LONDON:
WILLIAM AND FREDERICK G. CASH,
5, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT.

1856.

PREFACE.

SOME selections from the correspondence of Priscilla Gurney having appeared in a periodical, and excited much interest, the Editor of the following brief "Memoir" has been requested to prepare, for the press, a Biographical Sketch of her character, and of the incidents of her life.

The experiences recorded in the following extracts from her Journal and Letters,—her sound reflections on Divine things,—the weighty impressions made upon her mind, through the teachings of the Holy Spirit, and the many striking lessons of instruction which are intermingled with illustrations of these workings of the spiritual life in her own soul, are calculated to serve as waymarks to the christian traveller as he journeys onward to the heavenly Canaan; and he may be encouraged to "run with patience the race set before" him, by tracing the footsteps of this dedicated servant of Christ, whose course on earth, though short, afforded a remarkable evidence of the sanctifying and preserving efficacy of Divine grace, and of its suffi-

ciency to enable those who unreservedly yield to its power, to bring forth "much fruit" to the praise and glory of God; and proving, in no common degree, that "honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that is measured by number of years; but wisdom is the gray hair to man, and an unspotted life is old age."

S. C.

Chelmsford,
Fifth Month, 1856.

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MEMOIR

OF

PRISCILLA GURNEY.

CHAPTER I.

1809–1817.

YOUTHFUL DAYS OF PRISCILLA GURNEY—DEATH OF A SISTER-IN-LAW—OF HER FATHER—CORRESPONDENCE—ILLNESS OF A BROTHER—WINTER AT CLIFTON—SPEAKS AS A MINISTER AMONGST FRIENDS—DEATH OF HENRY GURNEY — OF HER BROTHER JOHN GURNEY — JOURNEY TO NICE WITH INVALIDS—RESIDENCE AT NICE.

From a variety of circumstances, the large family of Gurney of Earlham has become generally known, as consisting of persons who, from conspicuous piety and benevolence, have been interesting to the christian world. Placed in a prominent position through the advantages attendant on wealth, talent, and education, they exercised no common degree of influence on the extensive circle in which they moved; and, from the example of their father, John Gurney, who evinced through life much nobility of mind and a generous nature, they imbibed, from their earliest years, a disinterestedness of character, which, as it became directed by the sanctifying influence of religious principle, induced these young persons largely to diffuse

around them the channels of blessing which were so richly placed under their control. Two of their number—the late Elizabeth Fry and her brother Joseph John Gurney—were conspicuously devoted to the cause of christian philanthropy, and their memory is cherished with reverential esteem and love by many, among the varied classes of society, who witnessed their untiring efforts to promote the glory of God, and the well-being of His rational creation. In the published memoirs of these two excellent persons, sketches of the domestic circle at Earlham have been so fully drawn, and so extensively read with lively interest, that any minute recapitulation of them will not be requisite in introducing to the notice of the christian reader the circumstances which marked the brief, but remarkable, earthly course of Priscilla Gurney, the youngest of the seven sisters, who, with four brothers, were, at an early age, bereft of maternal care and instruction. Their mother, who was characterized by peculiar loveliness of mind and person, and by a pious and well-directed solicitude for the true happiness of her children, was removed by death from her important sphere of usefulness, when the eldest of her flock was only seventeen years of age; leaving to her sorrowing husband the responsibilities that now so weightily devolved upon him. He was an indulgent and affectionate parent, greatly beloved by his immediate family; his mind was vigorous and intelligent, his manners kind and courteous, securing the high esteem of his fellow-citizens of Norwich. His eldest daughter, Catherine, was, in an unusual degree, qualified to watch over and to promote the right education of the younger members of the motherless group, and her influence was greatly blessed to them. For many years Earlham was a peculiarly favoured and cheerful abode; its

inmates enjoyed much liberty;—some amusements of fashionable life were indulged in; yet the pursuits of literature and refined taste, united to careful and diligent attention to the duties of benevolence and charity, uniformly occupied the greater portion of their time. As they became matured in age, the love of pleasure was gradually tempered, and their minds were impressed with a deep conviction of the vanity and unsatisfying nature of all merely temporal gratifications. Their bright sunshine of unalloyed prosperity became overshadowed by some dark clouds of affliction, and their youthful hearts, subdued under the chastening hand of a gracious Almighty Father, felt the need of a solace which earthly delights can never permanently supply: they sought the blessings of the redemption that is in Christ; and, although derived to them through somewhat diverse channels, they became partakers of the peace and love of God.

When, in 1792, John Gurney was deprived of his tenderly beloved wife, the loss, which to himself was well nigh overwhelming, could be but very inadequately appreciated by his children. The three elder ones, Catherine, Rachel, and Elizabeth, could, however, in some measure, estimate it; but a profound experience of sorrow, and of the awfulness of witnessing a summons from the endearments of domestic life and from the possessions of wealth and luxury, appears to have been, for the first time, abidingly made on the minds of these young persons, by the death of Elizabeth Gurney, the fondly beloved wife of their brother, John. She was a near relative of the Earlham family; and, from their infancy, a strong attachment had bound them to each other. She was united to her affectionate husband but little more than a year, when, in the Fifth Month, 1808, she was removed from the circle of which she was the

ornament and delight. "This," says J. J. Gurney, in his autobiography, "was our first grand draught of family affliction since my mother's death; a draught which, in the bitterness and dismay of our spirits, we all drank together to the very dregs. . . . . Never shall I forget the overwhelming woe of our beloved brother. His bodily health was dangerously affected by his long watching and nursing; but, thanks be to the Author of all good, the affliction was blessed to his soul, and was the means of bringing him, in repentance and humiliation of spirit, to the Saviour's feet."

During the brief period in which the cup of temporal enjoyment appeared to overflow, the residence of John Gurney, jun., was at Lynn; but, after his bereavement, he was tenderly cherished by his father and sisters under the paternal roof; and it is in the endearing character of a sympathiser in *his* affliction, and an acute sharer in the deep sorrow that was again soon afterwards dispensed to the family, that we first become intimately acquainted with the subject of this memoir. Priscilla Gurney had hitherto been occupied in a comparatively inconspicuous pursuit of diligent, though quiet duty: she had, from her childhood, been inclined to commiserate the sorrows and sufferings of the poor; she had been accustomed regularly to visit those of her own district, to relieve their wants, to inspect the instruction of their children, and especially to help and comfort the sick and aged. But additional interests of a most weighty character now claimed the solicitudes of the Earlham household, and called forth the energies of Priscilla's mind. Scarcely a year had elapsed after the decease of Elizabeth Gurney, when the health of the beloved and honoured head of that large family began to sink under the pressure of internal disease.

His symptoms did not, in the view of those around him, assume a serious aspect, but he was, himself, strongly impressed with a belief that they would terminate fatally. In a letter to his sister Buxton, written in the Fourth Month, 1809, Joseph John Gurney thus alludes to the indisposition of his father:—"He is certainly better, and much more comfortable, though I believe him to be still persuaded that he is in great danger. This idea is most groundless, according to all the best opinions, but it is impossible to root it out of his mind." That the apprehension of his very critical state was graciously designed to stimulate the dear invalid to a diligent use of the few fleeting months that were yet to be added to his earthly course, appears evident from the visitation of divine love that was, in a striking manner, mercifully vouchsafed to him.

Early in the ensuing autumn, when, from deep mental conflict and increased bodily suffering, John Gurney was becoming an object of most painful interest to his affectionate children, another source of anxiety claimed their attention. Several of the family were attacked by scarlet fever. Priscilla appears to have been the first who was affected by this disorder, then Daniel, and afterwards Joseph; each of them being favoured to surmount the disorder; but their faithful and excellent attendant, who had, for more than thirty years, been the careful nurse of the whole circle, and justly held by them in high esteem, was, whilst engaged in her assiduous efforts to promote their recovery, seized with the fever in its most alarming form, and soon removed from them by death. This distressing event was quickly followed by a dispensation of a most afflicting and solemn character. Their beloved father's state of health became rapidly

worse, his sufferings were great, and his spirit was sorely agonized under a sense of "his past errors and infirmities;" but, says his daughter Rachel, "he wrestled with God in prayer, and grace and help were given him." He repeatedly addressed his family in a very instructive manner. He "spoke of the purity of the law laid down by our Saviour, extending even to the thoughts and desires;" and, ere the hand of death was laid upon him, and the mortal anguish for ever closed, his soul was favoured "to rise out of the fiery furnace, purified by the Great Refiner." "He frequently expressed that he feared no evil, but believed that, through the mercy of God in Christ, he should be received in glory." "He continued in the possession of joy and peace" until, as we may reverently believe, he was permitted to unite with the ransomed above, in the endless song of praise to the Lord God and the Lamb.

Priscilla Gurney had sufficiently recovered from the effects of the fever to admit of her devoting herself, with most affectionate tenderness, to the duties of her afflicted parent's chamber; and she "left him almost less than any one." Six weeks after this solemn event she writes, in a letter to her beloved sister Fry:—

We have so many objects to interest and engage us that we seldom can feel any painful vacancy; but this does not, I believe, prevent us from mourning, as we ought to mourn, for the loss of such a father as ours was. The recollection of him is dearer to me than I can well describe; and the separation from him, and from dear nurse too, is often most truly affecting to my feelings: but it is a sorrow so mercifully united with hope and comfort, that we ought rather to rejoice in their removal to a better state.

In the altered situation of the bereaved family, various circumstances concurred to bring the members of it under a serious consideration of the religious course which they believed to be most likely to conduce to their right settlement in christian truth. At a time when their hearts were rendered peculiarly impressible by heavy affliction, and acutely alive to the soothing effect of sympathy and to the consolations of the gospel, they became intimately acquainted with a pious and zealous clergyman of the "Established Church," Edward Edwards, of Lynn. He evinced a deep interest in the spiritual condition of these young persons, and was instrumental in imbuing their minds with a clearer comprehension of the fundamental principles of New Testament doctrine. This naturally induced a strong mutual attachment, which at length resulted in the union of several of the family with that section of professors with which their kind instructor was connected. But whilst some of them were attracted in *that* direction, others soon afterwards yielded to an influence of a *different* character. The example of their beloved sister Elizabeth Fry, who had become a decided *Friend*, and who had, in a remarkable manner, been enabled to uphold, in great brightness, the standard of christian excellence, operated powerfully, yet almost imperceptibly, on several of the family circle; and this, together with a consequent increase of acquaintance, not only with the principles, but also with many devoted members, of the religious Society in which they had been nominally educated, was, under the Divine blessing, the means of strengthening their attachment to the worship and views of "Friends," and they eventually became firmly established in their christian profession.

Notwithstanding this diversity in the external mani-

festation of their conscientious impressions, there was much of the true "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" preserved amongst them, and the fruits of gospel love, and of submission to the cross of Christ, were evidenced in life and conduct.

Some letters from Priscilla Gurney to her sister Fry, written in the year 1810, describe the serious considerations into which her mind was introduced, whilst yet somewhat undecided as to her own future course, as well as her earnest desire to be guided by the Holy Spirit. The style of expression will show that she had not been accustomed to adhere to the correct grammatical language used by "Friends."

MY DEAREST BETSY,—

I have been wishing to answer thy letter ever since I received it. . . . . It is always interesting to hear at all intimately from thee. I am sure I can feel for thee in what thee must have had to go through lately;* but I am never inclined to feel *much anxiety* about thee. There is so much cause for hope that thee will be carried through every trial, as thee has hitherto been. Thee wishes me to send thee a particular account of myself; but I really hardly know what to say. When I think of thee I feel so ashamed of myself. I do not know how to communicate all my great weakness and deficiencies, and this, I believe, is one reason why I do not write oftener to thee; but I may truly say that I often think of thee, and feel very near to thee in heart. Thy sympathy, even at a distance, is very valuable and helpful to me. I have sometimes suffered painful discouragements, chiefly from finding my heart still so attached to the world; but more often, lately, I have been hopeful and comfortable; indeed, I have no cause to be *un*comfortable, except from my own want of faith and

* In reference to E. J. F.'s early engagements as a gospel minister.

continued deficiencies. Some pains that I feared so much seem so unexpectedly removed. I felt so much anxiety lest we should be any source of pain to dear Catherine,* but nothing can well have exceeded her conduct towards us. She gives us the most entire liberty to pursue that path which is the most for our good and happiness: I do not mean only in judgment, but in *feeling;* for she has fully expressed to us that, let us be what we may, if we act from *conscience,* she does not think it would give her any pain. . . . . I think I never felt more truly united to her, or more happy and easy with her, than I do now. Her cheerfulness, calmness and steadiness, is the greatest support to us all; and what a blessing it is after all we have suffered.

A few months later, to the same sister she writes:—

I felt thy kindness in writing to me with all thy numerous engagements. I am glad thee wrote to me what was on thy mind, and I now beg of thee always to say to me, with perfect freedom, anything that thee thinks it *right* to say. I had rather know all thy fears and anxieties about us, and I really dread shutting my eyes against the truth, from whatever quarter it may come. . . . . The last two months have, in many respects, been very sweet and peaceful ones to me; though my spirits have been frequently depressed, yet I have *internally* been generally calm and at rest. . . . . I believe, my dear Betsy, thee art mistaken if thee thinks that I am puzzling and perplexing myself with different doctrines and opinions: I never, that I remember, felt less inclined to do this, or less able to bear it; and the reading that I have had has not been of that sort. I have read lately Walker's "Christian," and his "Christ the Purifier," which are only on general principles in which I think all Christians must and do agree. Such books

* Catherine Gurney had returned from a lengthened stay at Lynn, where she had become united to the "Established Church."

as these are only enlightening and strengthening to me, and I believe really do comfort and do me good. I have also been reading some chapters in the Testament, with Scott's Commentary, which has been a real assistance to me. It has convinced me of two things; first, how very little I know the Bible, and also that some assistance in reading it is, to some people, very beneficial, though all may not require it; for, though I firmly believe that we ought not to be *guided* by *any man* or *anything* short of the Divine direction, yet I have no doubt we may be assistants to one another. I must now say a little on our communication with the Edwardses, at least tell thee, as far as I can, *my* feelings on the subject. . . . . Our union with them has certainly been no indifferent matter to any of us, and it is my firm belief that we may consider our connexion with them as a great blessing. . . . . I think nothing in life can be sweeter than to feel union in spiritual things with those that are dear to us, and to be stimulated by it to press forward in the way to eternal life and happiness: this has very often been the effect of their influence upon my mind; it has made me more hopeful, has given me more faith in the efficacy of our Saviour's sufferings and death for our sins, and seems to have taken off that miserable sense of my sinfulness and weakness which often so heavily oppressed my heart: but I am sure they have not destroyed or lessened my belief in the absolute necessity of obedience to the will of God. I hope I am enabled to desire that I may not choose my own way, but that I may be more and more willing to commit myself entirely to Him who can and will direct us, if we come unto Him in sincerity of heart; but I must confess to thee that these desires are too often *very faint*, and my weakness and inability are very great.

During the summer of this year (1810), Elizabeth J. Fry visited her endeared connexions at Earlham. She mentions in her journal having much conversation with some of them

upon their religious views, and says, "I felt very fully strengthened to express my mind, and not to shrink; and I believe I did no hurt." On her return home she records, "abundant cause to be grateful that, on leaving Earlham, and my tenderly-beloved brothers and sisters, my mind felt very clear, trusting that I had been enabled to accomplish that which came to hand to do amongst them: and I hope without hurting the great cause."

The intercourse, which was thus intimately renewed with her sister Priscilla, tended much to strengthen, in the mind of the latter, a conviction which had evidently become more clearly impressed, that the path designed for her by Infinite Wisdom was in the line of dedication to the service of Christ, as a consistent *Friend*. When this course was opened before her, *in the light of Truth*, she was firm and decided in her endeavour to yield her whole heart to follow those manifestations of the Divine will which were graciously vouchsafed to her. She, however, felt the loneliness of her spiritual allotment; and, about three weeks after her sister's departure, thus addresses her:—

I have, indeed, very much felt thy loss, my dear Betsy, and have thought of thee since we parted with a deep and tender interest and affection. Indeed it has, at times, been discouraging to me to find *how much* I have missed thee. I cannot help sometimes longing for thy encouraging and supporting influence; but I do not doubt that it is for my good to stand as much alone in my present path as I do, for it is too much my disposition to lean upon others; and I firmly believe that, if my dependence were more solely placed on Him whose help is all-sufficient, I should not be liable to the painful discouragements I now and then experience. My weakness is very great, and it seems at times almost impossible to keep fast hold of what appears to me as right for myself. I fear to give way to any-

thing like a spirit of complaining, knowing what abundant cause I have for thankfulness. But thou so well knowest the present state of our family, that I believe thou canst understand my difficulties, and I have no doubt canst sympathize with me in them. In some respects it is a harder trial of faith to be amongst those who seem diligently, and in sincerity of heart, to be seeking the one thing needful in a different way from ourselves, than with those whose hearts are in the world. It does bring everything so to the test, which is often a *humiliating*, though I doubt not *useful* trial to us. . . . It would, perhaps, be too sweet and too easy were we entirely united in one path: as it is, how delightful it is to feel as much unity as we all do in the most important concerns. I do not think I ever felt a more uninterrupted harmony and affection to reign amongst us than at this time. I have very often thought of thy dear Joseph's advice to me when he was here, not to be discouraged at feeling in some respects walking *alone*. This is what I must expect to do, though it is sometimes painful to my feelings. . . . I feel it often an inestimable privilege that my mind has not been *more* unsettled from Friends, for I do believe it to be so remarkably safe a path, that I increasingly feel the value of it. . . . . Dear John went to Lynn this morning, where he expects to stay about ten days. He has been so very comfortably settled at home that we are all sorry to part with him again. Dear Joseph has been in one of his *very sweet* minds lately; it is most encouraging to see him going on as he is. We cannot but long for him not to flinch from the cross of Christ, in whatever way it may be presented to him. . . . . I have rather set my mind on Quarterly Meeting next week: I wish it may prove a stimulus to me. I look forward to the return of the Grove family* with pleasure and comfort. Their influence, I think, will be helpful to me. We had a nice visit from Hannah and Elizabeth.† I thought dear Hannah in a remarkably sweet and open mind, though I

* Her uncle Joseph Gurney's.

† The daughters of her uncle Joseph, afterwards the wives of Jonathan Backhouse and Robert Barclay.

did not feel any ability to be intimate with her. She seems really very happy in her prospects. Jonathan, I think, must be a valuable young man.

To a beloved Friend, who had been made willing to devote herself to the service of Christ, P. G. writes:—

Second Month 25th, 1810.

I cannot doubt thou hast done the right thing, and what was required of thee; and in doing this we experience peace and serenity, which the gratification of our own wills and desires can never give. And though, indeed, we have cause to acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants, yet obedience gives us confidence to cast ourselves upon God, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. May we endeavour, under all circumstances, and in all situations, to cleave unto the Lord, who alone can uphold us, and renew our strength daily. . . . A stedfast adherence to what we know to be our duty, though it may sometimes bring us into apparent difficulties, is, I have no doubt, a help and a strength to us in our dealings with others. But if thou art sensible of failings and weakness in this respect, I know how to sympathize with thee. It is no easy, no light work, to maintain the watch; but though we may be frequently falling short, so as to feel much discouragement, let us *still endeavour* to watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation. If we are enabled to see the Truth, and at least at those times when we are alive to it, we must see and feel that, of ourselves, we are wretched and miserable and poor and blind; and this ought to make us humble and meek and lowly in heart; and the fruit of this spirit should appear towards others, by rendering us patient, gentle, &c., though steady and firm in all we believe to be right.

Soon afterwards she penned the following instructive remarks:—

It is consoling, under the sense and burden of our manifold infirmities, to find that others have had the same trials—the same

pilgrimage to pass through. At times the present state of probation, and the prospect of what is at the end of the race, wears a more serious aspect than at others, and seems to come more home to the heart; and yet, how much more cause we have to wonder that this should have so *little* effect upon us, than that it should impress us awfully. Oh, how important it is that we should, *at all times*, be found *watching!* But how far am I from this desirable state. Almost every day proves my unwatchfulness and want of faith. This makes me feel the necessity of going on quietly, and professing little; in short, of showing our faith more by our *works* than by our *words*.

A few weeks later, she addressed the following letter to her friend and cousin, Anna Buxton (afterwards the wife of William Forster). The similarity of their course, and the manner in which both of them were brought by experimental religion, to an implicit faith in the immediate power and teaching of the Spirit of Truth, united them very closely in the life and love of the Gospel.

Earlham, Ninth Month 29th, 1810.

I believe I never felt for thee such love and sympathy as at this time. . . . It is frequently a support and refreshment to me to turn my thoughts towards thee, and it is an encouragement to me to remember how thou hast hitherto been mercifully led and supported in that path which I have also entered. It is often the earnest desire of my heart that we may, every one of us, whether Friends or not, be enabled to "run with patience the race that is set before us," and labour to enter into that rest which is prepared for the people of God. I do, indeed, increasingly feel the infinite importance of it, though the work is sometimes very hard to our weak and frail nature, and we hardly know how to hold on our way amidst the temptations and discouragements which we are liable to in our pilgrimage here; yet we know there is an Almighty power which can preserve us through them all, and make our way clear before us;

and to this may we, at all times, and under all circumstances, look for strength.

I feel very deeply interested in Joseph's state of mind at this time, which, indeed, seems to be a serious one. Whatever path he may in future think best to pursue, it is my belief that there is something in him that draws near to *Friends*. But I desire to leave all these things, for I really fear to have any selfish considerations; though being in some things so much left to *walk alone* is, now and then, very distressing to my spirits. Yet I have hardly ever felt any *essential* discouragement, or any *misgivings* as to the steps I have myself taken, for which I ought to be thankful. I do believe that *nothing short* of very much giving up, in heart, *all* things in this life will do; and this we must diligently labour after, whatever it may cost us.

About this time she addressed the following letter to her beloved cousin, M. B.,* who, like herself, had yielded to convictions, which led to the full adoption of the christian views and practices of the Society of Friends:—

"It is impossible but that our having come to the same conclusion should be a fresh bond of union between us. I confess I feel it so, though I never felt more inclined to love and to be united to all who are endeavouring to serve God to the best of their ability. It is so hard valiantly to maintain the christian warfare, that whatever we find is an assistance to us is too valuable to be rejected. If we have thought it right to adopt a stricter appearance externally, may it indeed be an incitement and a stimulus to keep our watch more diligently, that "we may lay aside every weight, and the sins that most easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us." The adopting our religious garb is like a more open profession to others, that we desire to forsake the world, or at least the evils

* Maria Barclay, afterwards the wife of Robert Were Fox.

of it; and in this way it appears to me a very serious thing, and no light matter. I have cause, indeed, to be humbled at my little progress in the best things—my lukewarmness, unwatchfulness, and manifold deficiencies and infirmities. One thing I am sure of,—that the more we are devoted to a religious life, the happier we are, even *here*.

The winter of 1810 was passed by Priscilla Gurney in the quiet pursuit of her usual avocations—administering to the necessities of those around her who were suffering from penury or sickness, and in the supervision of the schools in the vicinity of Earlham Hall, which had been established through the active benevolence of its inmates. We have, from the pen of her brother-in-law, Sir T. F. Buxton, a lively reference to the assiduous attentions devoted by Priscilla to the relief of the indigent, and to the several "days in every week" in which she was exclusively employed in visiting them: "I can," he says, "speak of the manner in which she was prepared, as soon as breakfast was over, to proceed to her task; her basket in readiness, filled with such little presents as she thought might be useful or acceptable to those who were suffering from disease." The comparatively inconspicuous course of duty, which thus occupied much of her time, was peculiarly favourable to that spiritual communion with her Redeemer, by which the experience of his love and power prepared her to show forth the riches of his grace; and, through the effectual operation of his Holy Spirit, the principles of christian truth professed by Friends were increasingly precious in her view, and she was enabled to dedicate her whole heart to the service of her Lord. Her example in the domestic circle operated powerfully, and evidenced that the one great object of her life was to

"press toward the mark for the prize of" her "high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Priscilla Gurney attended the Yearly Meeting in London in the Fifth Month of the following year, and three weeks afterwards she writes to her sister, E. J. Fry, a report of the Quarterly Meeting in Norwich.

Earlham, Sixth Month 28th, 1811.

MY DEAREST BETSY,

I think it will be a satisfaction to thee to hear that the Quarterly Meeting has passed off very smoothly and comfortably, as far as *we* are all concerned. I returned from Hunston on Second-day, after paying a pleasant visit there. I found (on reaching home) Richard and Nancy Alexander here; they had made the effort to come to see us, which I thought really kind of them, and I think it was pleasant to both parties. It is such a pity that Friends should absent themselves from Earlham, where there is such a willingness to receive them. I met Henry Hull before meeting on Third-day, and was very glad to see him again. The first meeting, and indeed both, were interesting. H. Hull seemed to give general satisfaction. Rachel was much pleased with him, and was not, I believe, at all overset by the meetings. Ann Burgess and Elizabeth Robson are pleasing, and I have no doubt valuable Friends. We had our Yearly Meeting dinner as usual; and in the evening Anna* and I went to the Grove to see H. Hull and the other Friends, which was quite a refreshment and treat to us both. Dear H. Hull was very affectionate to us, and seemed pleased to be with us again. He and Joseph had had a warm meeting in the morning. Catherine is most kindly disposed about him, and seems really to wish to see him here, and he intends to pay us a visit the next time he comes to Norwich. The next morning Anna and I again breakfasted at the Grove, and went to Tasborough† with all the Friends, as I wished

* Anna Buxton. † At Tasborough a small meeting of Friends is held.

to be as much with them as I could: the morning was very comfortable to me. We returned to dinner to meet Samuel Alexander and Lucy Maw, and their visit was very pleasant, and I hope easy to *them*. Nothing can well exceed dear Catherine's kindness and sweet disposition of mind towards all the Friends, she seems so anxious to do her part rightly. John behaved very kindly to them. As for dear Catherine, she is quite an example in her conduct: it has been a real satisfaction to me to be with her again, and for us to be living again together. I may truly say she is an encouragement, and in many things a *help* to me on my way. . . . . I hardly know what to say about Joseph: I think thou wouldst be encouraged about him, if thou couldst see his most sweet and amiable conduct at home: he seems to me to have been really stimulated and encouraged by the Yearly Meeting, strengthened and confirmed in many of the principles of Friends. I never saw him appear so earnest in the search for truth and in the pursuit of his duties. I fully believe he is anxious to apply for the *best* direction, with a willing heart and a humble spirit: indeed, this appears to be the case in a remarkable degree; therefore I feel how desirable it is to commit him to a better care than ours, earnestly desiring that nothing may frustrate the work that seems going forward in his mind. I must now, before I conclude this account of us, tell thee that I have been very comfortable: I have more than usually enjoyed settling again at home. Though often oppressed by my own infirmities and discouraged by weakness, yet I feel in the main happy and cheerful. My home is a truly happy one to me. Our blessings are indeed abundant, and I am sure I have cause to acknowledge that *the way of the cross*, as far as I have been willing to follow it, has been to me *a path of pleasantness and peace*, and that when I draw back, it produces dissatisfaction and uneasiness. Dear Anna's company has been very sweet and valuable to me: I think we were never so united. I feel a near interest indeed in thee, my dearest Betsy, and value not a little the time that

we have lately passed together. And now, hoping to have rather an intimate and full letter from thee, I must bid thee farewell, and remain, with near and dear love,

Thy very affectionate sister,

P. G.

Priscilla Gurney had, from religious conviction, declined the amusements and pursuits of fashionable life, and had adopted, in her external appearance and deportment, the sober habits of *Friends:* and knowing by experience how greatly such a course of conduct tended to preserve from the evils of the world and from the power of temptation, she was anxious that her beloved brothers and near connexions might be induced to resist all those allurements to pleasure and vanity which are inconsistent with the christian life; and she felt assured, from the peace which she found in this path of self-denial, that the smile of Heaven rested upon it. She addressed, at this time, the following excellent letter to her youngest brother, Daniel Gurney, then twenty-one years of age:—

Sixth Month 6th, 1811.

I believe there is so much that is positively wrong and contrary to a christian spirit in public places, that they have such a pernicious tendency to lead so many into dangerous temptations and even sins, that I rejoice when any one I love is brought to the conclusion of giving them up. And if thy mind be brought to this conclusion from the dictates of conscience, I wish to encourage thee to stand firm, and not be afraid to avow thy sentiments on the subject to others; for I believe a degree of boldness in such things may be strengthening to ourselves, and may be helpful and encouraging to our companions. It is well for us in all our occupations and engagements to walk cautiously, to examine the motives by

which we are actuated, and to attend to the voice of conscience, which surely is no less than the Light of Christ manifested in our hearts. We are too apt to engage in things that are wrong, because we will not consider and will not open our eyes to this light. I often think that young men are exposed to many more temptations and difficulties than women, and if they are enabled, by Divine assistance, to stand against them with courage and humble dependence, that they may do much more by example than women can do. My first and earnest desire for all my dear brothers is, that you may become as shining lights in the world, not hiding your candles under a bushel; that you may not be afraid of shewing to the world that you have espoused the cause of religion and prefer it before all things, and that you are willing to suffer shame for the sake of it. How very far had I rather this should be the case with you, than to see you in possession of all the honours and riches that this world can afford.

About four weeks later than the above date she penned the following to an intimate friend:—

Seventh Month, 1811.

I have such a belief that if the heart be willing and our desires sincere, *though we know them to be weak and faint*, that a way is mercifully made for us, and hard things are rendered comparatively easy beyond what we could look for or expect. I can sometimes *long* that we may every one of us more and more commit our way unto the Lord, casting all our care upon Him who careth for us, and then I believe indeed we should find Him to be an all-sufficient helper in time of need, and an all-wise director in the midst of *darkness* and difficulties. We are too fearful (at least I am sure I am) of thus committing ourselves to Him, and of casting ourselves without reserve on his mercy, forgetting that He will impose no burthen upon us which we are unable, through his assistance, to bear, and though He may even call upon us as it were to forsake father, mother,

houses, lands, &c. for his sake, or at least to prefer Him before all, yet are not his strength and his love sufficient for us? And is not the reward sure, and greatly beyond all we may have to suffer here? Do read in Isaiah xl. 27, to the end, xli. 10-17, xliii. 1–3. They are deeply instructive passages, containing striking encouragement to the christian traveller. In such cases (as that of pursuing a more decided path), we must all agree in thinking that it is most desirable not to be precipitate or hasty; but on the other hand it requires care, if the time be clearly manifested to us, not to let it pass by us, as there is no doubt danger of our imaginations being at work and too active; we had need more continually have our hearts fixed on Him, who alone can lead us surely and safely, and who enables us, I believe, to distinguish necessary from imaginary duties. . . . . I believe the most effectual way of serving others is to be *faithful ourselves;* for when can we with so much confidence and hope apply to the throne of grace for those we love, as when we are endeavouring humbly (though in ever so much weakness) to serve God acceptably ourselves?

Does not the Lord hear the prayer of his dependent children? I have almost universally found that, when my own will has been opposed to what I have believed the Divine will concerning me, the *power* for prayer and drawing near to God have been taken from me; and on the contrary, when I have given up to what He has required of me, I have at times, I believe, felt his presence (which only gives peace and comfort) to be near me, and also an increased ability to receive Christ as a *Saviour* and *Redeemer*."

Near the close of the year she wrote to another beloved friend:—

In such a shifting scene as this, we want more than natural affection to keep us together; we must cultivate that love which is still more precious, which may be lasting among all the changes and chances of this life, and which, it is delightful

to hope, may be perfected in another world. The very imperfection of all our enjoyments here has sometimes a confirming effect on my mind, it is so like the seed being sown of the fruit which we expect to reap hereafter. I have no doubt there is nothing to be compared to the enjoyment of walking in the paths of the Lord, and we experience this truth as much from the painful experience of wandering from them, as from the blessedness of ever being enabled in some measure to walk in them. . . . Oh that we may become increasingly fixed on that rock which remains firm, however the winds and the waves may beat against it; but the attainment of this is no *light*, no *short* work, and we have deeply and painfully to experience our own weakness and infirmities before we learn where our true strength is to be found. I think I may say, that I am increasingly convinced that in ourselves we are and have nothing.

Fifth Month 14th, 1812.

Most fully do I unite with thee in the blessedness of obedience to the Divine will. In the Christian life we see there is such a variety of means for the attainment of the same great end, that it has always appeared to me, that we are not sufficient of ourselves to choose those means which are best for us, and that the more we commit our way unto the Lord, the more we are likely to prosper in that spiritual life which is light and peace; and I think that the scriptures authorize us to believe that the Light or Holy Spirit which is given to every man to profit withal, is *all-sufficient* to lead us in the way in which we should go, that it reproves us for every evil thought and word, and that it instructs us in our duties; and does it not also open our minds to understand the important doctrines of Christianity? Surely obedience, which is so enforced by Friends, does not lessen but increase our faith in the redeeming power of Christ. At those times when we the most endeavour to do right, have we not sufficient proofs of our great infirmity, and of the corruptions of human nature, to teach us that of

ourselves we are blind and poor, and miserable and naked, until clothed with the righteousness of Christ?

In the Seventh Month, 1812, Priscilla Gurney writes to her sister Fry:—

I could not easily say how sweet and how comforting I feel my union with thee, perhaps never more so than it has been of late. It is delightful to have one sister with whom I *so fully unite*. Many things have interested me much since we parted (on returning home from the Yearly Meeting). I was well repaid by attending the Essex and Suffolk Quarterly Meetings. It has been a privilege indeed to me to have been so much with Stephen Grellet: I think I have hardly ever been so impressed by the influence and example of any individual as by his. He does truly appear to be deeply experienced in the christian life He paid us an interesting visit. I could not help feeling pain at parting with him; but I hope the good effect of having been with him may be lasting. Margaret Bragg and Sarah Hustler's visit to Norwich has also been particularly acceptable. I have felt very much united to them: their meeting with *us* was truly sweet; we *all* felt it to be so; evincing so much love and sympathy, and entering with so much tenderness and consideration into our present situation. They and dear Catherine have felt very affectionately towards each other. Joseph and I were, at different times, a good deal with them, which we much enjoyed. It is often very striking to me to be so much alone, and I cannot but feel the weight of it, though it does not make me feel uncomfortable, and I truly desire it may be a means of drawing me more closely to Him, who can make a way for us where there seems no way, and from whom, I fully believe, we receive all-sufficient light, strength and comfort, even when external means of help are withdrawn from us. I do indeed feel the necessity of cleaving to the Divine principle within us; for how little are we fitted to choose a way for ourselves, or to be our own directors. Those words of our Saviour have lately been

an encouragement to me; when Peter said to Him, "And what shall this man do?" Jesus saith to him, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." This appears to be our individual concern, and I do at times long to do this with more faith and simplicity, and with a more devoted heart. I have felt much encouraged about dear Joseph; his conduct is truly exemplary, he seems to be more established, and we have all felt him to be a strength and comfort to us. It has been very satisfactory to have dear John taking his place amongst us; yet it has brought home, rather forcibly, that our sentiments and views do not accord with his, and this, now that we have each to act for ourselves, calls for the exercise of mutual forbearance, patience, and the subjection of our own wills.

The beloved brother to whom reference is made in the last portion of this extract, was now becoming an object of tender and anxious solicitude to his sister Priscilla, who observed a visible, though very gradual, decay of his physical strength. He had never surmounted the shock which his nerves had sustained from the death of his lovely wife; and, for many months, his affectionate family watched his declining health with serious apprehension of the probable result. Priscilla's attentions to him were seldom remitted. She however left home for a short time in 1813, for the purpose of visiting her beloved cousins at Darlington, taking the opportunity of spending a little time at Ackworth, where her constant interest in the welfare of youth led her to feel a peculiar pleasure in witnessing the education of the children, and an earnest desire that they might receive solid and scriptural instruction in the great truths of revealed religion.

About this time she first spoke in the religious meetings of Friends. She was greatly abased under a conviction of the

solemnity of this most weighty engagement. In a letter to a serious person of her acquaintance, she says, (in referring to a judicious remark which he had made to her upon the subject of the ministry,) "I trust thou wilt still continue to feel a care over me, and mayst thou be enabled to desire my preservation from the dangers and temptations which may attend me in this awful service; and that I *only* may continue in it if it be really according to the will of my Lord and Master, whom I desire to serve; deeply sensible, as I am, that He *alone* is sufficient to direct and uphold me, and to give me strength and ability to perform his will."

Of her offerings in the ministry, the members of her own Monthly Meeting, in their testimony respecting her, give the following account:—

Her preaching was clear, sound, and convincing; well adapted, we believe, to the states of her hearers, and accompanied with "the demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" and it was the more edifying because she was so generally led to insist on the most important doctrines of the Christian religion, especially on the influence of the Holy Spirit, and on the promise of salvation through faith in Christ, the Mediator with the Father, and the Redeemer of the world. She was also frequently clothed, both in public and in private, with the spirit of supplication; and her prayers, being offered up in great abasement of mind, were attended with precious solemnity.

The impression which was made by her ministrations, on the minds of general hearers, was very strong, as may be perceived by the following remarks from the pen of the late Sir T. F. Buxton. After describing the loveliness of her person and manners, he adds:—

No less remarkable were the powers of her mind. I have

seldom known a person of such sterling ability; and it is impossible to mention these mental powers without adverting to that great, and, in my estimation, that astonishing display of them, which was afforded by her ministry. I have listened to many eminent preachers, and many speakers also, but I deem her as perfect a speaker as I ever heard. The tone of her voice, her beauty, the singular clearness of her conceptions, and, above all, her own strong conviction that she was urging the truth, and truth of the utmost importance—the whole constituted a species of ministry which no one could hear, and which I am persuaded no one ever *did* hear, without a deep impression.

Before the winter of 1813 set in, Priscilla Gurney accompanied her brother John to Clifton, where they remained until the return of mild and genial weather: but the hope which had been entertained, that a residence there might tend to restore his health, was disappointed; and he continued to sink until the Ninth Month, 1814, when, in much peace, his spirit, which had, in the simplicity of a little child, yielded itself to the visitations of heavenly love, departed from its enfeebled tenement, to enter, as there was good ground to believe, into one of the many mansions of the "Father's house." Priscilla Gurney had commenced the practice of making entries (by way of journal) of her experiences and impressions. In reference to this deceased brother, she says:—

In watching the progress of dear John's complaints, a few things have particularly impressed me, with respect to ourselves and others who have been interested for him. First; the importance of making a right use of all the talents committed to our charge as long as they are continued to us, that when our Lord and Master calleth for all, or any of them, we may be prepared to give an account thereof, that we may obtain the

blessing promised by our Saviour to the faithful: "Well done good and faithful servant, &c." Secondly; the importance of *working while it is day*, of doing that work which the Lord hath appointed for each of us to do, because we see the night cometh quickly, when no man can work. Thirdly; the importance of cultivating good habits in the time of health and strength, such as patience, the subjection of our will and temper, temperance, and those habits which belong more immediately to the outward conduct of life, as the regulation and employment of time, our deportment towards others, propriety and caution in all our words and actions. In our attendance on dear John, during this illness, we have had to feel the inestimable advantages of every good habit acquired in the time of health. We may say that with *him* these have been *many*, and that the effects of them have been very observable—consoling and encouraging to those around him, and to himself an incalculable advantage and help under the pressure of infirmity.

The solemn monition referred to in the foregoing extract, "Work, while it is day," was specially addressed to the mind of this disciple of Jesus. The principle of piety—of holy love to God—which from her early youth had been implanted in her spirit, had become deep and strong: and He, whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways, who seeth the end from the beginning, had apportioned to her brief hour of life the work which He had appointed for her to perform; and, from one time to another, He saw meet to open in her soul the spring of gospel ministry; and He graciously prepared and smoothed the channels through which its living streams should flow, for the refreshment of many a faint and weary pilgrim in the pathway to the Heavenly Jerusalem. For more than a year previous to her brother John's decease, she had occasionally given utterance to the feelings of fervent

solicitude for the spiritual well-being of those amongst whom her lot was cast. She was humbled as in the dust before her God, and in awful reverence she entered on this most solemn but blessed service. In allusion to it she writes:—

Though, in the having to minister to others, and in having publicly and before others to call upon the name of the Lord, I have had to experience many fears and doubts, have known many humbling and low times, yet I esteem it an inestimable privilege to be in any way engaged in the service of the Lord; and as I have found and experienced it to be a means of drawing me nearer to himself, of opening to my mind the truth, the reality, and the blessedness of religion, I may well reckon it one of the greatest blessings of my life, one that has been *well worth* suffering for. It is an engagement that particularly calls for the subjection of the will, to sit as at the feet of Jesus, to hear his word; but, indeed, this is a most desirable attainment, whatever be our situation or calling temporally and spiritually. I am increasingly persuaded that the Spirit is, through infinite mercy, manifested in our hearts, and the more we follow it in faith and simplicity, the more we know of its excellence and beauty, and we experience that it is the power within us which overcomes sin and the power of the world.

Of the *character* of her ministry, Joseph John Gurney writes in his autobiography:—

Of all the ministry I was accustomed to hear, none was, perhaps, so beneficial to me as that of my beloved sister Priscilla. It was generally in good authority, well expressed, lucid and scriptural, and to me rendered much the more effectual by her life and conversation, which afforded me a pattern of no mean value. The language of her whole conduct to her younger brother in the truth, was, "Follow me as I follow Christ."

On the 18th of Ninth Month, 1813, the following is entered in her Journal:—

On this day last year I first opened my mouth in the ministry. Surely, in reviewing the past, I can make this acknowledgment with Job Scott: "Lord, thou hast held my hand and covered my head in many battles." Grant, I beseech thee, a continuance of thy preserving care and tender mercy over me, and such a renewal of thy strength and of thy grace, that I may be enabled in this mysterious and awful engagement to "walk by faith and not by sight," that I may run and not be weary, and walk and not faint; for without thee, O Lord, I can do nothing.

Ninth Month 22nd, 1813.—Oh, for a closer walk with God! It is sometimes my desire to walk humbly with my God; but, alas! He only knows my wanderings, my reluctance to serve him with full purpose of heart, and to "commit the keeping of my soul to him as unto a faithful Creator." Nevertheless, I am persuaded that practical religion chiefly consists in the subjection of our own will, and in submission to the will of God:—enable me, O Lord, to pray that thy will and not mine may be done.

Eleventh Month, 1814.—In reviewing the last year of my life, a period which has been important, and in some respects deeply interesting to me, I have thought that the language comes home to my experience: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour." At least there have been seasons, when I have seen what abundant cause we have for the abasement of self, to magnify the Lord; though I have often had to pass as through the deeps, though I have often greatly feared through the weakness of faith, though I know that I have inexpressible cause for repentance and humiliation before my God, yet I may acknowledge that there have been times when my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. The glory, the beauty, the excellency of his salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord, have been increasingly opened before me: I have seen more clearly that Christ is God our Saviour, and I have believed that

to know experimentally the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, is life eternal, and that this knowledge is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Utterly unworthy as I am, I have been permitted to hold communion with my Saviour, and through Him to draw near unto my God. I have known what it is, not only to sit at his feet, but to *hear his word*, and that word has spoken life and peace to my soul. Under the burden of sin and the weight of many infirmities, my spirit has often been comforted in believing that Christ, who has borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows, who was tempted like as we are, yet without sin, is our High Priest in heaven; that he ever liveth to make intercession for us, and is the propitiation for our sins. "Lord I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye hath seen thee, therefore do I desire to abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." For I have assuredly felt, that, through Jesus Christ our Lord, there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be feared, under the apprehension of death and present suffering. I have often been comforted in the hope, that a new and living way has been opened for me into the kingdom of heaven, into a state of everlasting peace and rest. The Lord has been mercifully pleased to "anoint my eyes with eye-salve," so that I have seen at times, though it may be very dimly, that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, that he is the chiefest amongst ten thousand; and how do I desire that he may be, now and evermore, the beloved of my soul. I humbly hope that I know him better than I did a year ago in his various characters. First, as our *Physician*, as having all-sufficient power to heal the sick and to cure all manner of diseases; as having power to make us clean, to bind up the broken-hearted, to give light to the blind, hearing to the deaf, as making the lame to walk. O Lord, let me not blindly feel myself as amongst *the whole*, but, as I am truly, amongst the sick who need the healing power of this great Physician. Enable me, gracious Father, to come unto him with faith, that I may be healed, that I may be cured of every disease spiri-

tually; may the Sun of Righteousness arise continually in my soul with healing in his wings. Secondly, as our *Shepherd*, the good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep, by whose care we want nothing; who maketh us to lie down in green pastures; who leadeth us beside the still waters, even the everlasting fountains of life; who restoreth our souls; who leadeth us into the paths of righteousness for his name's sake; who, though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet preventeth all fear of evil, because He is with us, because his rod and his staff continually comfort us. O Lord, grant, I humbly pray thee, that Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, may be my Shepherd, leading me whilst here in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and through the valley of the shadow of death unto thine everlasting kingdom. Suffer me not to wander from the paths and from the guidance of the heavenly Shepherd, lest I should become a prey to the ravenous wolves, to our devouring adversary. Keep me where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon, that I may be one amongst the little flock of Christ to whom thou hast promised to give thy kingdom. Thirdly, our *Example*. His life should be our pattern—as it concerns our God, our neighbour, and ourselves. Like our blessed Lord, we should humbly and earnestly endeavour to glorify God upon the earth, and to accomplish the work which he hath given each of us to do. As He went about doing good, so our lives should be devoted to doing good for others; and in relieving, according to our ability, the temporal and spiritual wants of our neighbours. "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." We should learn of Christ to be meek and lowly of heart, humble in prosperity, patient in adversity; for He suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps: when reviled or persecuted, let us not revile again; when oppressed or afflicted, let us not open our mouths to murmur. May I not, for the remainder of my life, look so much to my fellow-creatures for an example, but unto Christ, who was a perfect pattern in his life and conversation, looking stedfastly

unto Christ, by whom alone we can draw nigh unto thee, who art our Heavenly Father, the Lord Almighty God, and the King of Saints: may I be enabled to love thee more and more with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself; may I learn much more than I have yet learned, through the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, to be like my blessed Redeemer, meek and lowly in heart, humble and thankful in prosperity, patient in every tribulation: may I learn to suffer more willingly with Christ; so that when time to me here shall be no more, I may humbly hope that, through his merits, through thy tender mercy and unmerited loving-kindness, I may come to reign with him in glory for ever."

In the First Month, 1815, she visited the families of Friends of Norwich Meeting, her uncle and aunt Joseph and Jane Gurney being her companions; and her sympathy was shortly afterwards painfully excited on behalf of these dear relatives in the illness and death of their son Henry:—

On Sixth-day, Second Month 10th, 1815, we received the intelligence that they were in much distress at the Grove, dear H. having been extremely ill in the night, which having ended in a fit of apoplexy, they could not expect him to survive long. Joseph and I immediately went to the Grove, and soon joined them in the room where dear H. was lying on the point of death. The scene was awful and deeply affecting. My beloved uncle and aunt were sitting over him, much distressed and bowed down under the heavy and unexpected stroke. We sat in solemn silence; but, as our beloved cousin seemed on the point of departing out of this world, I could not forbear from supplicating that the Lord Jesus would, in that awful hour, *come quickly*—that the Lord, in taking him hence, would be mercifully and graciously pleased to take him to himself into his everlasting kingdom, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." We seemed also called upon to

render thanksgiving unto Him who had preserved this beloved child from the evils and pollutions of this world, and humbly to pray that every transgression might be blotted out and every sin covered—that he might be clothed with the garments of righteousness—that he might be admitted into the presence of the Almighty—that the Lamb might lead him unto living fountains of water.

He quietly departed on the day of this interview. Priscilla Gurney remained for a time with the bereaved parents; and on Second Month 20th, she writes:—

I have been staying here since the event happened, and I have felt it quite a privilege to be with them. The true and Christian resignation with which my beloved uncle and aunt have been able to meet this close trial, has been encouraging and strengthening to those about them: to the feelings of nature it is indeed a bitter cup, but my hope and belief is, that it may be sanctified to them all. What an inexpressible blessing it is to see those we love fortified by faith and submission at such a time as this! I have seldom felt it more than on this occasion. How very solemn are these repeated warnings to those who remain! Surely, we have had to *experience*, within the last few years, that in the midst of life we are in death. There is hardly anything to me more overwhelming in these events, than the loud call to us who remain to watch and be sober: it is easier to *say* they are warnings, than to listen to and obey the warning voice.

How have I longed during this time, and from our late experience, that our hearts might be more and more weaned from the world, and that our conversation might be more in heaven! where indeed we seem to have much *treasure*. This is my feeling about those who have gone before us, who have escaped from the troubles and conflicts of this life, and are anchored on the Rock of Ages, in a state of everlasting rest and peace. I some-

times think, if, through a grain of faith, we are permitted now and then to have a glimpse of this eternal state, it compensates for all our troubles and conflicts here. I do not at all approve of taking a gloomy view of life, where we have so much to make us thankful and happy, at least with a *better hope* beyond it; and with *such* a *hope*, how can we be thankful enough for the unmerited and marvellous blessings bestowed upon us?

TO HER SISTER, ELIZABETH GURNEY,

Earlham, Fourth Month 9th, 1815.

You have been brought very near to me of late. I have renewedly longed for you, unitedly and separately, that you may increasingly surrender yourselves to the service of our blessed Master. I have thought that the sacrifices which have been, and may yet be required of you, may be in some of the *little things* (at least what may be termed little by others); but I am increasingly persuaded that some of these little things are often our stumbling-blocks, and also, that nothing is little which promotes our own spiritual advancement, or serves that most holy cause, which I humbly trust we have in some measure at heart. May you both, under a sense of the manifold benefits and mercies bestowed upon you, be more and more willing to surrender whatever may be called for at your hands! I believe thou art hardly aware, my beloved Elizabeth, how, inasmuch as thou hast been faithful to the Cross, thou hast been a strength and a comfort to me. Many and many a time have I secretly felt the influence of it; and a renewed and earnest desire has of late attended me, that thou mayest be encouraged, not only to be an helpmate to thy dear husband, but more and more of a true and faithful and self-denying labourer in the vineyard.

Early in 1815, Priscilla Gurney was engaged in the very weighty service of paying a religious visit to the families of Friends throughout the limits of her own Quarterly

Meeting. She was accompanied by her beloved cousin Anna Buxton, who, like herself, had been enabled, by yielding to the constraining love of Christ, to forsake all that, to the human soul unregenerated by the Spirit of Truth, appears to promise a life of pleasure and self-indulgence. These two devoted messengers of the gospel were closely cemented in the fellowship and communion of their Redeemer; and there were not a few, who, by their christian labours and pious example, were stimulated and encouraged to take the Saviour's yoke upon them, and humbly to learn of Him who was "meek and lowly in heart." After the accomplishment of this important visit, Priscilla Gurney was, during most of the remaining months of the year, and also for several of those in the spring of 1816, permitted to remain at her comfortable home, and to pursue, in comparative retirement, those occupations which remarkably promoted the welfare of the surrounding district. Her beloved sister Richenda had married Francis Cunningham; and, referring to this circumstance, she writes, Second Month 26th, 1816:—

I have of late felt much bound to home, and it is very comfortable not to have any particular call from it. It is rather remarkable to feel my own allotment so very different from that of my three sisters,* with whom I was brought up in the closest union; my religious path so distinct from theirs, and prospects in life so different. *How* these things are *we know not. His* ways are not as *our* ways . . . . I confess that, since Richenda went, I have sometimes felt a little lonely and solitary in my path; but I earnestly desire to be thankful for the many blessings which are bestowed upon me. How comforting it is sometimes really to believe that, whatever be our allot-

* Hannah having several years earlier being married to T. F. Buxton, and Louisa to Samuel Hoare.

ment, whether we rejoice or whether we mourn, however varied may appear our portion here, yet that every dispensation is sent in wisdom and mercy, and that each has that which is best for us. I do so desire to rest in this belief, and in whatever state I am therewith to be content.

To another friend she addressed the following, dated Fourth Month 4th :—

I have longed to tell thee, during the last few weeks, how sweetly in my inmost heart my love has flowed towards thee, indeed towards all your beloved circle, though under an inexpressible sense of my own weakness and nothingness, which has been especially brought home to me of late ; yet I can desire for others that they may go on from strength to strength, and come forth valiantly for the cause of truth amongst and before others: this is the prayer of my heart for you, that whilst health and strength and life are granted you, you may dedicate these talents to the service of your blessed Master—that you may not limit the power of the Lord, saying in your hearts, "Thus far will we go and no farther."

Some important family claims required Priscilla Gurney's attention during the time of the Yearly Meeting of 1816. She felt the privation, consequent on being necessarily absent from it, to be no small trial; but, with the spirit of cheerful acquiescence with every circumstance permitted or dispensed by the providence of her heavenly Father, which so uniformly prevailed in her heart, she was perfectly willing to forego the enjoyment of a privilege which she greatly valued. She says :—

It has been quite a sacrifice to me to give up the Yearly Meeting. I had *longed* for such a refreshment, and to be a little more amongst Friends, as we have not much of this kind of help in our situation here: but I do not doubt it is for our

benefit to be, for a time, deprived of much outward help and consolation. This has been remarkably my case for many months past. My dear uncle and aunt's long absence from home has been one thing that has given this feeling: but I am sure that these things are ordered in wisdom and mercy, and ought to lead us, with more faith, trust and dependence, to the Source of all good.

As the autumn approached, it brought with it, to some of her near connexions, accumulated solicitudes and sorrows. Her uncle Joseph's family had, as we have seen in the record of the previous year, been suddenly bereft of a young and interesting member: this heavy affliction was quickly followed by another, not less deeply felt, and attended by circumstances of peculiar trial. Their daughter Rachel was seriously affected by symptoms of pulmonary disorder; and, by the urgent advice of some attendant physicians, it was concluded that she should pass the ensuing winter in the milder climate of Savoy. Some painful anxieties respecting others of their beloved circle prevented Joseph and Jane Gurney from accompanying their dear child to a foreign land; and they confided this important charge to their affectionate niece, of whose skilful and assiduous attentions to such as were sinking under disease they had repeatedly had ample proof. Priscilla Gurney felt weightily the responsible undertaking; but meekly surrendered herself to perform the arduous duties which it involved. Her tenderly sympathising, yet lively spirit, her deep and solid piety, her constant faith and trust, rendered her a most valuable companion to the sick and to the mourner, particularly to those in *early* life, whose future appeared to be no longer irradiated by the sunshine of youthful anticipations. Rarely could one be found whose experience could better

qualify to administer to the failing tabernacle; or, in seasons of extreme weakness and discouragement, when the spirit might sink at the prospect of the awful gloom that enveloped the dark "valley of the shadow of death," few could be more prepared to point the sufferer to those rays of "the Sun of Righteousness" which illumine the Christian's pathway to the tomb. The invalid was also accompanied by her sister Jane. This little, but very interesting party, commenced their journey on the 27th of Ninth Month, at which date Priscilla writes:—

Our parting at Earlham was under a most sweet and comforting impression of gospel love. We had a solemn reading. I felt engaged in prayer that we might be established, strengthened, and settled in the Truth as it is in Jesus; and I was enabled to commend myself, and those most dear to me, as well absent as present, to the Lord, and to his grace under every dispensation. The warm expression of christian love, unity, and sympathy, from so many of my near and dear friends, was consolatory on leaving my most beloved home. Our departure from the Grove was very affecting; but quietness and even peace prevailed. A low ride to Harleston. The feeling of most tender love and union of spirit with those I had left (united, I humbly trust, in Him who is the Light of the World,) was powerful through this day and night.

29th.—We began to read with dear Rachel, in the carriage, the Gospel of John. We had some interesting conversation, in which I fully expressed my desire that we might be unmoved under every dispensation, having our hearts withdrawn from the things of this world. Never did I much more earnestly desire that they may be uplifted above its cares and its enjoyments, and wholly fixed on our heavenly treasure. I felt my absence from my beloved family this morning; but was permitted to hold sweet communion with them in Him, and through Him, who is our advocate with the Father.

At Witham, one of their resting-places, she addressed the following to her beloved cousin, Anna Buxton, then about to be united in marriage with William Forster:—

Ninth Month 30th.—I believe I shall be much with you in mind, and in a little of that spirit which we may humbly hope still unites us together, under the varied events of life. Various and unexpected indeed they are, and such I must say is my present undertaking to accompany dear Rachel on such an expedition as this: I cannot but feel it serious on many accounts. I have deeply felt leaving home. I believe we shall sometimes have your sympathy, may we not hope your prayers for our preservation. Though the pain of leaving home has been great, yet a feeling of sweet peace has, I think, been permitted to attend us, and I have been, on the whole, quiet and comfortable. And now, my beloved friends, I may from my heart say, *Farewell.* May we more and more seek that Spirit which can enable us to mourn and rejoice together, and which may lead us continually to commend ourselves and one another unto that grace which can alone build us up, sustain, and comfort us.

The travellers reached Bury Hill on the evening of the last date. Here, another cousin, Elizabeth Barclay, whose health was in a very critical state, had been directed by her physicians to spend the winter at Nice. She was accompanied by a brother and sister, and by her cousin, A. R. Barclay. It was arranged that the two parties should proceed together. On the 1st of Tenth Month, Priscilla Gurney writes:—

It was interesting to meet the party here. Joseph and Elizabeth Fry came with their baby in the evening. E. F. visited both our patients in their different apartments, and

earnestly supplicated for each of us: for dear Rachel—that, whether her time here might be long or short, every dispensation might tend to her refinement and preparation for another state of being—that she might be increasingly established on that rock against which the gates of hell can never prevail—that, through our Redeemer, she might obtain the victory over sin, death, and the grave. This was very solemn. She prayed also for dear Jane's preservation and consolation, and for her establishment in the Truth; and for me, that during our separation the Lord might be a shelter from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible one may be as a storm against the wall. I believe our hearts were united and refreshed together.

Tenth Month 3rd.—A little withdrawing of that holy and heavenly presence which has mercifully attended me, was my experience during this day; I believe through my own unwatchfulness.

5th.—We were anxious about dear Rachel; she appeared to me very ill. We read together Cowper's hymn on prayer, "Jesus where'er thy people meet," &c. Oh, that we may all be delivered from temptation, and *kept* from all evil!

First-day, the 6th.—At Dorking Meeting. This text much impressed me, "The time is short," &c., conveying warning to the careless, and consolation to the afflicted—on the shortness of time, and preparation for an eternal world—on examining ourselves, whether we be in the faith—on that knowledge of God and of Christ which is life eternal, &c. . . . . In the evening D. B. read John vi. and Psalm ciii. to the family and servants; after which we had a solemn pause: I could not separate, and indeed it seemed that we could not part, without supplicating for mercy, and the blessing of God upon us, that He would grant to each of us what we need in things temporal and spiritual. We seemed afresh called upon to commend our beloved patients to the Lord, that his presence might be with them, that they might partake of the bread of life, and so come

unto Christ that they may never hunger, and believe in Him that they may never thirst.

7th. — Departure from Bury Hill — bustling arrival at Brighton.

8th.—Very interesting and memorable departure in our boat to the packet.

Before quitting the English shores she addressed her dear sisters and brothers. She says :—

A hope prevails that I am in my right place—that this separation from many things so dear to us may be a means of establishing us more in the knowledge and experience of the blessed Truth as it is in Jesus. For myself, I think I hardly ever was more sensible than since I left you, of the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Without some sense of this most precious knowledge my heart would have sunk more in leaving you all.

Night—on board the packet—very comfortless. Patients and nurses all ill. Beautiful morning. We brought the invalids on to the deck. The approach to the French coast very interesting. Landed at Dieppe. Our patients were carried into the inn amongst a crowd of people.

After a short stay the party proceeded to Rouen. Stopping at a village on their way, Priscilla distributed a few tracts.

One little girl brought me her father's Bible and read to me in it—(she said) "Voulez-vous venir dans notre Jardin?" It was a pretty scene—little rooms round it, with their beds—a crucifix in one of them. Many of the children could read, but no other Bible could I hear of. Gave a Testament to the landlady. One man would have disputed with me for being a Protestant: "Oh, vous n'etes pas Catholique—vous ne croyez pas a la Vierge." I could not speak French enough to justify

my creed. Our two maids had gone forward (to Rouen) in the diligence. We found a comfortable inn and things nicely prepared, but so different from England. Everybody full of life, dirty, but obliging. Pleasing femme de chambre.—I gave her a tract, and she promised to read it "au dimanche." Rouen is a fine old city—the Seine with its numerous islands, and the old city, a striking scene. I felt in some degree the emptiness of all worldly sights.

12*th.*—Had enjoyed some time by myself the two preceding evenings, and again felt the privilege of having those absent from me brought, in a lively manner, to my remembrance.

"Still in spirit we may meet,
And in sweet communion join."

A fatiguing day's journey to Verdun. Stopped at Louvier, —an interesting time there amongst the people—gave some tracts. A lovely young woman entered into conversation with me, and expressed some serious feeling—said very sweetly, "Nous devons aimer l'Eternel de tous notre cœur—oui, de tous notre force."

Tenth Month 13*th*, *First-day.*—Went forward to Mantz. I longed for the privileges of an English "Sabbath." The people were assembling for mass; but there was not much appearance of seriousness. I earnestly desire that our present mode of life may not scatter the seed of the kingdom in our hearts. A very sweet reading in the evening. I felt the separating effect of worldly things, but was enabled to supplicate the Divine blessing still to rest upon us, and, for our dear patients, that the Lord would satisfy them with the bread of life, and fill the hungry soul with His goodness. A covering of love seemed at last, at the close of the day, cast over us, and we separated peacefully.

14*th.*—To "St." Germains.

15*th.*—To Paris. Many objects of interest. The house

of the Empress Josephine, Malmaison, water-works at Marli; entrance to the city, grand, unlike anything I have seen before. Had a comfortable retirement by myself in my comfortless little dressing-room at our hotel.

19*th*.—Walked to the Agent's of the Bible Society,—agreed to communicate, should any opening occur where we settle for spreading the Scriptures. How much I desire that this may be the case. Leo called in the evening and engaged to send us some of his Testaments. It is cheering to me to have any prospect of a little good opening before us.

20*th*, *First-day*.—At home all day. With our two invalids had a little reading, and quiet time together, which was better than nothing. I was much, in mind, with our beloved friends in England; and, under the sense of our privation, I thought of and felt the words of this Psalm,—"Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

21*st*.—Preparations for leaving Paris. We were not sorry to leave it, as it is not calculated to make the happiest impression on the mind. Many French about us, amongst the rest our Mantua-maker, to whom I gave a Testament, with which she was much delighted, and said she should often read it with her little girl. Came forward to Melun. Dear Rachel more easy than usual, and we enjoyed our reading in the Bible and the first chapter of Baxter's "Dying Thoughts." Pleasant evening at Villeneuve: we read together the "Crook in the Lot."—I read hymns to dear Rachel, &c., with much comfort, especially this,—"How are thy servants blest, O Lord," &c.

They reached Sens on the 24th.

Rachel very poorly, which rendered the ride hence to Auxerre a painful one; but we went on with our reading. The vineyards on the sides of the hills much more luxuriant than any I had seen. Auxerre is a fine town. I walked over the

bridge; it was a beautiful clear afternoon—enjoyed the loveliness of the scene, the view of the town, the islands in the river—groups of figures coming down the hill with their baskets of grapes.

27*th.*—Autun. Another First-day. Read the Epistle to Titus. Whilst thus separated from the Church, I have felt an earnest desire that we may be increasingly united to *Him* who is the *Head* of the Church, and more and more know Him for ourselves; and also, that whilst separated in *person* from those who are the members of the Church, we may be permitted to enjoy spiritual communion and fellowship in Christ. We thought there was more appearance of the "Sabbath" being kept here than in Normandy, or near Paris,—more of seriousness among the people. We read this afternoon, with real comfort, and some unity of spirit, the 40th of Isaiah, 1st Peter, and the two last chapters of the Revelation; and I trust our hearts were a little raised above the cares and troubles of life.

28*th.*—The views of Autun and the surrounding country, highly interesting. We think the difference of the climate begins to be evident.

29*th.*—Chalon, not a striking place. Preparations for our voyage down the Saone. Our patients were carried through a thick fog from the diligence into our boat. I sat on the deck and enjoyed my morning's reading, though a little interrupted by passengers. I have found many opportunities, during this journey, for retreat and entire inward retirement, which have been particularly comfortable to me. As it regards my service to others, my present life is a humbling one.

30*th.*—This whole day peculiarly comfortless. Crowds of low passengers. The country more beautiful—especially near Lyons, the approach to which place is very striking; nor is it less so to one's mind to be at a place so often read and heard of. The air is very warm. The remembrance of the Martyrs interesting to me: Perpetua and Felicitas, and the history of the Church at this place. We ascended the hill behind the

Cathedral, from whence we had a fine view of the Alps, which was highly interesting: Mount Blanc, Mount Cenis, &c., &c.

31st.—We set off for our second voyage in a large boat, and soon left the Saone for the Rhone, which is a much nobler river, but the water is muddy. We reached Vienne, where we had but comfortless accommodation. The chambermaids zealous in our service; one very lively girl waited on us with great alacrity. I gave her a Testament.

Eleventh Month 2nd.—One of the pleasantest days we have had during our journey. The country in parts was highly beautiful, the mountains clothed with vines, very luxuriant. Our dinner was a cheerful one, in our boat. Drawing was to-day a pleasant occupation to us all. Elizabeth and I have, during these two days, thoroughly enjoyed the epistles to Timothy; and I have seldom felt more sensibly the superiority of *spiritual* good to *every other* gratification *whatever:* we feel that the one soon passes away, but the other nourishes the soul to life eternal. We stopped in the evening at Cerier. Two little girls in the inn, dressed like old women, interested me, and I promised them a Testament. Walked by the river by moonlight.

Eleventh Month 3rd.—I ran before breakfast to visit the mother of the two little girls (just mentioned), to whom I gave the Testament with some satisfaction, and a hope that a blessing might attend it to these dear children. We breakfasted in our boat. The wind being against us, we were obliged to stop at "St." Valiere.

4th.—A stormy and wet day—could only proceed five miles. This is a curious mode of life, much like that of a company of gypsies. The scenery very fine.

5th.—Proceeded to Valence and Bourg St. Antoine.

6th.—A pouring wet morning, but we contrived to convey our patients into our boat. We reached Avignon, and are settled at the most comfortable inn we have met with in France.

7th.—A satisfactory parting with the boatmen, to whom we gave a Bible and two Testaments. We had a comfortable reading; after which, in some conflict of mind, it seemed right for me to return thanks for the mercies hitherto granted us, and to supplicate that we might yet have the loving-kindness of the Lord, and know the way wherein we should walk. Pauline, a sweet little girl, with me in the evening.

Eleventh Month 8th.—Had some conversation with an old hermit, who lived in the mountains and occasionally comes into the town to ask charity: an interesting figure. Visited a poor woman in her cottage and heard with pain of the distresses of the poor, which I fear are spiritual as well as temporal. Gave a Bible to the landlady's son, an intelligent young man, and a Testament to Pauline.

9th.—A quiet comfortable home-day. We sat together part of the morning, reading, &c. Walked out before dinner, and we saw the remains of the palace of the Popes. The hall is now converted into a stable for a regiment of soldiers. The effect of the desolation, caused by the revolution, melancholy.

10th, First-day.—I have felt the want of more retirement for the last few days, from having risen late. Pauline read to me a chapter in the Testament, and I questioned her upon it with interest and satisfaction. I cannot help longing to take some part with the dear children. Pauline had been with her sick uncle to mass. Let us not judge others, though we may feel for one another, and prize the privileges *we* possess. We have been having our meeting together. I had to remind my companions of a text which has frequently been on my mind during our journey,—"Examine yourselves, prove your own selves, whether ye be in the faith, &c."—Of the importance, (especially) under our present circumstances, of self-examination whether we be in the faith, whether Christ be in us by his Spirit, whether we are so abiding in Him as to bring forth fruit. We read the fourth and fifth chapters of second Corinthians. Visited the Hospital, where the nuns of "the

order of St. Joseph" attend the sick,—an interesting scene. Had some conversation with the patients, also with the nuns."

In a letter to her beloved brother Samuel, she says:—

Avignon, Eleventh Month 13th.

I spent some time on First-day at a large hospital, where the sick people are attended by an order of nuns from an adjoining convent. I was interested much by the scene, both by the invalids and their attendants, and in my very poor way had some communication with several of them, and wished much to see the convent; but could not then obtain leave. The sick people seemed to benefit much by the kind care of the nuns; I could not help wishing for some such attendance in our hospitals. I took a Catholic edition of the Testament with me; but they would not accept it. The nuns were very kind to me, though addressed by the title of "Heretique." Since this visit we obtained a letter from the Bishop, with leave to visit the convent, and we have been there this morning and spent about an hour with the nuns. A most curious visit we paid. I wish I could describe it to you; it was a great favour to be admitted, and I believe it was owing to my having the appearance of a "Religieuse Anglaise" (English nun) that obtained the permission for us. They are only eighteen in number. I should think, by the appearance of the house, reduced—so many of their chambers appeared unoccupied. To be sure, we were never so addressed before; such invectives and denunciations against the Protestants, such entreaties to return to the "only true Church," such warm invitations to join their members, such expressions of horror at our heresy, as I really could not have believed had I not heard them. They all being about us, we could only answer their lectures and exhortations by a few broken defences of our faith. I was not in the least inclined to enter into discussion, but rather to gather what there was to be gathered of the sweet and good

spirit amongst them, and to unite in those simple truths in which we *could* unite. On this account, I believe, and from my appearance, they had more hopes of me, and were, in consequence, more earnest in their entreaties and invitations. After they had showed us through the house, chapel, &c., many of them fell upon their knees, which they said was to pray for us, that we might be converted and saved, and during the time we were there they were continually falling on their knees before some saint, or the Virgin, &c. There really appeared much devotion to their duties; but so much delusion, such narrow boundaries, that it was impossible not to be painfully impressed; and I could not help feeling and thinking how little was to be felt of the glorious liberty of the children of God. I said, I hoped we should part in christian love, to which they assented; and they really were very kind and affectionate in manner. It seems as if I were to be introduced to a variety in the christian world. I must confess that the experience of this journey has led me increasingly to value that religion which is spiritual and inward, and to desire to be more and more guided (seeing the delusions of men) by that Spirit and holy anointing which can really change the heart, and lead into all truth: at the same time, when we can, we ought to take example from the good we see in others, and I think we may gain some lessons from the Catholics. We must still remember that we are not to judge one another; there is One that judgeth. I have given away one Bible and several Testaments here, which have been thankfully received. The other day I had quite a long visit to a respectable man and his wife, and had a good deal of communication with them. When I am alone, I can manage to convey my mind tolerably, though in a very poor stumbling manner.

The *Superieure* of the nuns who attend the sick in the hospital refused to accept a Testament which I offered to her. Pauline has been with us all day—visit to her uncle and aunt, to whom I gave a Testament with satisfaction and hope. We

talked of the influence and instruction of the Holy Spirit, as superior to that of man. I long to see this more understood, particularly in France.

13*th*.—With Pauline to the *Libraire* and renewed my stock of Testaments. I felt low to-day: less access to the only Source of substantial comfort and consolation.

14*th*.—Farewell to the family of our landlady—rather interesting. Reached Port Royal in the evening. The mountains grand, summits covered with snow, colouring most beautiful.

15*th*.—Entrance into Aix, very fine: four rows of trees in the principal streets, fountains of hot and cold water, striking in their effect. The weather very cold, owing to the Bise (their north-east wind).

17*th*.—To Luc: country most luxuriant, with olive trees &c. Felt thankfulness in having been thus far carried through difficulties, and helped on our way, and for the various deliverances we have experienced.

18*th*.—From Luc to Frejus. The sight of the Mediterranean interesting. Walked to the Roman Amphitheatre. Sketched the scene.

19*th*.—A bitterly cold walk before breakfast to see the remains of the Roman Lighthouse. Wonderfully fine ride from Frejus to Cannes. At Frejus Bonaparte landed from Egypt and also embarked for Elba: at Cannes he landed from Elba.

Writing at this date to her sister Rachel, Priscilla Gurney says:—

We have to-day crossed over a very high hill, which took up most of the morning; I quite enjoyed my solitary walk, or rather ascent, up the mountain—my own contemplations, and the wonderful works of nature. I walked alone, until I overtook a hermit going on a pilgrimage to the Pope at Rome; and, feeling something like a pilgrim myself, we joined company,

and entered into conversation and a little sympathy on our way. He lived in a hermitage near Bourdeaux, and had travelled several hundred miles, taking with him no money, having only his staff, and (as he said) protected by *several crucifixes and relics* of "the order of St. Jaques." He wore a most curious large leathern garment, the sign of his order, covered with shells, relics and crucifixes. I asked him whether he had any companion. He said, none other than the one he wore—pointing to the image of our Saviour. I said, I hoped that his Spirit dwelt in his heart, as well as his image on his garment. He assented, and, after giving him a few sous, we parted.

20*th.*—Gave Testaments to our landlady and one of her neighbours. From Cannes to Nice, the entrance into which place was, I believe, deeply felt by us all: the remembrance of our long pilgrimage, the uncertainty of the event, especially to the dear invalids, excited much thought. May they so love the Lord that all things may "work together for good."

First-day.—Comfortable. Our meeting in the morning. This day I had to say a few words on the text, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." I had to supplicate that the presence of the Lord might be with us. These meetings I find occasion more conflict of mind than more public ones.

Eleventh Month 26*th.*—We took possession of our new abode; a house pleasantly situated, just out of the town. That the Divine blessing may rest upon us in it, was my desire.

27*th.*—My birth-day—thirty-one. I seem far advanced in my pilgrimage. A poor account from the Grove of their dear Joseph, which was trying and depressing. We began to read together in the evening Jones's "History of the Waldenses." We talked of the necessity of our simple and entire reliance on Providence, committing ourselves and those most dear to us

to his mercy and protection. Oh, that we may be enabled to do this!

28*th*.—I felt and expressed the desire that, in all our words and actions and deportment, we might be strengthened to confess Christ before men, and so guarded that in nothing we may deny Him. They that confess Him *shall be confessed*.

29*th*.—Rachel and I read the two first chapters of Revelations. We dwelt with comfort and, I trust, with some encouragement, on the promises to those who overcome.

Very anxious about dear Rachel. We read with much interest, and I trust not without some profit, that wonderful chapter the third of Revelations.

First-day, Eleventh Month 30*th*.—I enjoy my quiet retreat before breakfast. Our meeting after breakfast comfortable. I was enabled, under a peculiar sense of my own weakness, to express a few words on this text,—"He that cometh unto God must believe that He *is*, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him," and my desire that we might all come unto Him in this spirit of faith.

To her sister Rachel she wrote:—

I think often of those words of David,—"I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Oh, it is infinitely better to be a doorkeeper in his house than to possess *all* that this world can give! . . In this country we cannot but lamentingly feel that, though the harvest is great, the labourers are few. The blind worship of the Virgin, the images, and pictures of the Redeemer, gives me a melancholy feeling. Surely these things must tend to obscure his holy presence in the heart; and they appear to me obviously to have their deadening and darkening effect.

Twelfth Month 6*th*.—Poor account of dear Joseph. A low evening: solemn time at the end of it.

7*th*, *First-day*.—A solemn meeting together, at least it was

so to me, ending in prayer that, whatever may be the trials permitted, or sacrifices required, our faith may not fail.

9th.—A cloud seems to hang over us on account of dear Joseph's illness.

10th.—I much enjoyed reading with Elizabeth the third chapter of Corinthians,—"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

Twelfth Month 11th.—Read to Rachel Bishop Taylor on humility; some excellent instructions; may we take them home. I long for the growth of this christian grace in our hearts.

14th.—The suspense and deep feeling of anxiety about Joseph have been trying.

15th, First-day.—Assembled as usual for our little meeting.

Afterwards she wrote to her brother and sister Hoare:—

Withdrawn, as I have been, from my (usual course of) life, it has sometimes led to a serious review of myself, in which I have had humblingly to feel my many and various deficiencies in every way; but the mercy and redeeming love which blots out, and which covers our transgressions, has often, I think I may say, been afresh and powerfully manifested to me, and I have at times been permitted to feel the unspeakable consolations of the Gospel dispensation, and the love of God through Jesus Christ.

16th.—Visit from a young Countess. Not so comfortable a morning as usual. We talked of other people, which is seldom without dissatisfaction to me. How I do long that every thing in our hearts may be brought under the influence of christian love.

17th.—Visit from the Countess Cesolé. She gave us an interesting history of the sufferings of her family during the Revolution, and in a pleasing manner, with much feeling. The Abbé, her son, a priest, was afterwards introduced to us: the most humble and pleasing priest, in appearance, that we have seen.

18*th*.—The letters brought the sad and deeply affecting intelligence of dear Joseph's death. A solemn and suffering day.

For many months this beloved youth, the eldest and only surviving son of Joseph and Jane Gurney, had been in declining health. He had been remarkably preserved from the evils of the world, and his mind imbued with religious principle. Fully aware of his danger, he was favoured with great quietness and peace in his transit from time.

19*th*.—A low night.

P. G. wrote to her deeply afflicted uncle and aunt "with feelings not to be described." After this the sorrowing little company met together for a time of worship; "at the conclusion of which," she says—

I believe we were drawn unitedly to the throne of grace, humbly supplicating for those absent, as well as for ourselves, that the blessing of the Lord might be with us, sanctifying this deep affliction to many hearts, that our faith and patience may not fail. More quietness and composure prevailed to-day.

21*st*.—There is a peace, and sometimes even a joy, in this time of trial, in the belief which has been permitted to us that our beloved Joseph is at rest, and that the sustaining Arm is yet underneath those who remain in this state of probation. We read comfortably in the Bible before we separated, and were, I trust, enabled to commend ourselves and those far away to the preserving care, love and mercy, of the Shepherd of Israel. Thus ends this solemn week, one not soon to be forgotten; and the effects of which on our hearts will, *I hope*, never be done away.

First-day, 22*nd*.—I had to express my desire that we might attend to our Saviour's injunction, "Take no thought for the

morrow," &c., and also to allude to the importance of doing the day's work in the day time; for "the night cometh" *soon*, "when no man can work."

In reference to the decease of their dear cousin, she writes to her brother J. J. G., Twelfth Month 26th:—

There are few passages in Scripture that have been more animating or comforting to me than the promises in the Revelations to those who overcome: I have dwelt on them with a peculiar interest, and I believe with a renewed desire for us who remain, that we may with more faith, more humility, and more entire and simple obedience, enlist under the banner of the Captain of our salvation, that we may follow Him whithersoever He leadeth us, that we may trust in Him with our whole hearts, until we know the victory to be obtained through *Him* over sin and the world, and over death. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." It is indeed the prayer of my heart, my dearest Joseph, that thou mayest be encouraged and enabled yet to go on, yet to press forward in every religious, domestic, and public duty, in quietness and humility, "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, *serving the Lord*." When the curtain drops and the scene closes here, how is then every sacrifice in the cause of religion, how is every act of faith and obedience to be prized; how inestimable do they become as evidences of that grace by which alone we are saved! Whilst thus separated from the world and withdrawn from service, and feeling my own poverty and littleness in every way, the desire is still lively for the faithful servants of the Lord, that they may be stedfast and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; and for none do I feel this more earnestly than for you, my dearest brothers, that in your respective allotments you may so hold fast that no man may take your crown: and may you be more and more willing to *bear the cross* of our blessed Lord; may it in nothing, *little* or great, be

a stumbling-block to you. May you, in all things, suffer his holy will, becoming as little children, "learning of Him who was meek and lowly of heart;" thus you will become (and indeed it is my most comforting hope and belief for you) as valiants in his army, as faithful servants in his most holy church, and you will finally find in Him "eternal rest unto your souls."

In a letter to a Friend in England, about this time, she says:—

I have felt an earnest desire that thou mayest not be discouraged in the important duty of attending meetings. It appears to me most desirable that we should ever bear in mind for what we go to meeting,—not to seek man nor the help of man, but to seek the *Lord* and the *help* of the *Lord;* and I can truly say, I am increasingly persuaded of the truth of these words,—"The Lord is good to those that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him." How does every fresh experience of life make me desire for those in early life, that they may remember their Creator in the days of their youth! I feel so *very sure* that they will never have cause to regret any sacrifice made in his service, or for his sake.

Twelfth Month 23*rd.*—It was with some effort that we began the occupations of the week. Elizabeth and I resumed our Bible reading. In the evening we continued the "History of the Waldenses."

24*th.*—After breakfast I visited some poor people with Cook (their man-servant). Went up a dark staircase, into a little room, where we found a poor widow, just dead; also a tailor and his wife, &c. We afterwards saw the funerals of two rich ladies—an aunt and her niece—who died nearly at the same time, one of them in the "church." We met the procession coming from the old lady's house. In the "church" many priests were assembled, also *les Filles de la Charité*, holding candles, and praying for the departed souls. The old woman was carried

on something of a bier, her head and face exposed. She had on a smart cap, with white satin ribbons. The view of death bringing home *our* present trial, and still more the oppression of that covering which seems spread over the Truth, made me very low.

25*th*.—Beautifully warm clear day. I walked under the rocks. This text comforted me,—"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." It seemed right for me to express my belief that this blessing is designed to attend us all, present and absent, in this time of affliction. If we be faithful, patient and obedient, we shall all find that it is, and will be, more blessed to mourn than to rejoice.

27*th*.—Rawlinson B—— and I visited, with the Countess and the Abbé, *les Filles de la Charité*, and were interested in seeing this Institution, which appears, in many respects, well conducted. We were entertained with many figures which had been arranged for the devotions of "Christmas." Some things in the religion of the Catholics appear to me so very childish.

28*th*.—Walked round the foot of Mount Cennier. This has been to me a peaceful, though low week.

First-day, 29*th*.—Our Meeting was quiet and satisfactory. These words were very comforting to me, which I had to express,—"Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me *be with me* where I am, that they may *behold my glory*." Consolation in our separation from so many near and dear to us, and encouragement to us who remain to seek to be partakers of the same promises. How great the importance of having our hearts weaned from all earthly dependencies and excitements! Read a little in Leighton on this subject. Had a sweet walk before dinner on Mount Cennier. The distant views of the mountains, with the sea and town, and the setting sun, were particularly beautiful, and awakened many interesting and affecting associations. Began to read Young's "Night Thoughts" through with Elizabeth.

31*st*.—Elizabeth very unwell. I sat with her in her room

and read to her portions of Scripture. This evening I felt the solemnity of the close of this year, and an earnest desire for us all, absent and present, that we may begin the next with renewed diligence, running "with patience the race that is set before us." The peasants, in the adjoining garden, were dancing and screaming with apparent ease and low pleasure. It was a contrast to my own feelings. Rachel expressed to me, before we parted for the night, how very solemn she felt the prospect of entering another year with such a mist before it—such uncertainty as to life or death. Looking *every way*, the prospect was, she said, serious to her; the continuance of illness, death, or the restoration to life: the latter would be, to her, almost as solemn as the former. It is my sincere desire that, whatever may be the events or the dispensations of the year to her, "neither life nor death, heights nor depths, nor any other creature," may "be able to separate" her "from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Heard distant shouts and sounds of rejoicing after I was in bed, and also early this morning, the first day of 1817.

First Month 2nd.—Our meeting this morning was particularly interesting to me. I felt peculiarly drawn *to supplicate in spirit* for ——, feeling near unity and sympathy with her, desiring that, though the Lord has been pleased to show her great and sore troubles, He may, in his own time, bring her up again as from the depths of the earth; and, if He seeth meet still to lead her as into the wilderness, that He may "open unto her the door of hope;" that his word may be a light unto her path, and a guide to her feet; and for us all, in this new year, that He would enable us to do his will, giving us, day by day, our daily bread.

3rd.—Our invalids very poorly: I felt unable to administer much comfort to them.

5th.—With E. to visit the poor. Rachel and I afterwards read Barrow's Sermon on submission, then had a pleasant excursion by myself: enjoyed the company of two sweet inno-

cent-looking girls who sat beside me, but we could only communicate by signs.* I was amused with the people, and they with me. Afterwards I visited the mother of a large family.

The reader, in mentally accompanying Priscilla Gurney in her daily pursuits, can scarcely fail to be impressed with her constant piety, her unvarying spirit of warm christian benevolence, drawing her into sympathy with every fellow-creature. She appeared never to live for herself, or to seek personal gratification; for, though she derived sweet enjoyment from beholding the beauties of the external creation, we may perceive that an aspiration after the sensible influence of the love of God was ever the pervading principle in her soul. This Divine love led her to desire to relieve the necessities, and to soothe the sorrows, of all the children of want and affliction, and so enlarged her heart that it knew no limitations from diversity of sect; not being restrained even by the chilling effect of spiritual darkness, or of the mists of gloomy superstition. She was always attracted towards the young; but her tender interest was, as might be expected, especially excited in reference to the welfare of her nearest connexions: of these, the children of her beloved sister, E. J. Fry, occupied a large space in the sphere of her affections. She not unfrequently addressed them by letters suited to their youthful tastes, yet calculated to imbue their minds with a disinterested concern for the happiness of others, as well as with a reverence of their Almighty Creator. It was her practice to write to the two elder ones of that interesting

* Nice being an Italian city, many of the lower classes in the district beyond it cannot converse in the French language. They speak a mixture of French and Italian.

family in the French language, thus encouraging them in their study of it. From Nice she sent to them the following (translated):—

First Month, 1817.

My dear Nieces, K. and R. F.,

We are much pleased with Nice. It is an agreeable town, situated on the sea, and surrounded by high mountains. Some of them have their summits always covered with snow, and sometimes with clouds; but the weather has been so fine here since we came, that the sky is almost always clear. Oh, how charmed you would be with this country! When I walk about alone I often think of you, my dear nieces, and I wish much to have you for my companions in my walk, because you would have great pleasure in traversing the country with me, and in admiring the fine vines that are seen from the roads around our dwelling. The poor people, also, would interest you much—their language, their dress, and their manners, are very different from those of the poor in our country. Sometimes I visit them in their houses, and often find them occupied in cultivating their gardens. I am obliged to make myself understood by *signs*, which sometimes serve me for a *French* word, and sometimes for an *Italian* word; because they speak, in this part, a mixture of these two languages. In the town and its environs we sometimes find a crowd of beggars, and the peasants in the country have also the habit of begging. We do not often give them money, but we have purchased for them a supply of soup, which is distributed every day in the town, at the gate of an establishment called the Hospice. It is a charitable institution for poor girls who are orphans. Our friend, the Abbé de Cesolé, has the direction of it. We have visited this house, and have remarked with pleasure that it is well conducted, and the girls have an appearance of good health and happiness. They are to come and make a visit to us in the garden, and have cakes and fruit. They often ac-

company the Abbé (to whom they give the name of *Father*) to funerals. There are not any nuns at Nice Since the Revolution several convents have been abandoned. There are some monks in the convents of Barthélémi and Cennier who have been long here. One of these monks comes every week to our house to make *la quete* (a gathering), for the rules of their order oblige them to subsist on charity. One of them enters a house, and asks for bread and oil and other things necessary for them; they rarely eat meat, and they are not willing to accept money. My cousin Jane has sketched one of these monks, and when we return to England we may perhaps show you his portrait.

Thus, by exciting in the young mind an interest on behalf of the indigent, were the seeds of benevolence implanted, which have been fruitful in maturer age.

TO LUCY AGGS.

Nice, First Month 3rd.

I feel a very near interest in all that concerns thy welfare, and sincerely desire that a blessing may attend thee wherever thou goest, and in whatever place thy allotment may be cast. I look sometimes with something of a feeling of anxious solicitude towards many of the young people at Norwich. I hope, my dear Lucy, thou mayest be encouraged, according to thy ability, to labour amongst them faithfully, in spirit, if not in word. However weak, however poor we may be, (and I am sure I feel myself amongst that number,) we must still be willing to take our portion of service, be it little or great, that we may be called upon to perform. We must remember that the "increase" can alone be given from above. I cannot well express to thee what I sometimes feel for our dear Friends at Norwich and in Norfolk, to whom I feel increasingly united (I hope) in spirit. How do I desire that the Spirit of Truth may more and more prevail amongst us! Whilst so wholly and unexpectedly

withdrawn from them, I still often turn in spirit towards many, individually and collectively, with feelings of near interest, and sometimes with the hope that, whether present or absent, we may yet be permitted to feel something of the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Surely the loss of our beloved Joseph, an event so awful, so striking, and so affecting, will be the means of impressing the young people amongst us! I believe I may say, it is the prayer of my heart that it may be so, that they may be more willing to gather in faith and obedience, (for that, I believe, is what is wanting amongst us,) under the wing of the Shepherd of Israel. I think I never on any occasion felt the force of these words so much,—"Blessed are those servants that are found watching."

First Month 8*th*.—Call with G. B. on the Greniers, (a Swiss minister and his wife,) which proved satisfactory.

9*th*.—Our Meeting this morning was deeply interesting. Surely we were baptized together. I have, for many days past, been brought into a deep and an unusual degree of sympathy with each member of our company; and before we separated this forenoon, I was permitted and strengthened to pour forth the feelings of my heart before Him to whom all things are naked and open, and who knoweth all our sufferings, temptations and conflicts. The solemnity of this morning, I think, cannot soon be forgotten. I trust its effects may be lasting in our hearts.

10*th*.—Speaking of the spiritual consolations which she has of late experienced, Rachel said that, in the midst of this affliction, she had at times known a joy which she had never felt in the same degree before. I finished "Barrow on Submission" to her in the afternoon.

11*th*. We received a pleasant visit from F. Grenier, the Swiss minister. He and Rachel and I had some conversation on the present state of religion in the world. I hope this may prove a useful acquaintance for us.

To a beloved brother she writes at this time:—

I can say with truth that the experience of this journey has not weaned my heart from Friends, or lessened my value for that holy, *actuating*, and living principle, which, I believe, is the groundwork of our profession, if not *as much as it ought to be* of our practice. On the contrary, I long for its prevalence in the world, which certainly does appear to me (I hope without the spirit of judgment) chained and darkened by forms and ceremonies: but this submission to the Spirit, to its guidance, to its baptisms, to its humiliation, its teachings and its sanctifications, we find daily and hourly in the *way of the Cross*, and therefore, alas! it is too much of a stumbling-block to many of us; at least I am sure it is to me; but the sense of my own weakness and imperfections does not make me the less *desire* for those most dear to me, that they may not flinch from this "Cross of Christ."

12*th*.—Meeting as usual. I had to express a few words of encouragement to each dear individual of our little community; (with the inquiry) had we not each known the voice of the Lord? that it is mightier than the noise of many waters? What had his voice spoken of consolation, of warning, and of invitation? How important is *obedience* to it!

14*th*.—I rode with the A's in their carriage the greater part of the morning, and enjoyed the beauty and the sublimity of the country. We went some miles on the Genoa Road, which is one of the wonderful works of Bonaparte. Our reading and parting this evening were solemn. I had felt, during the day, much impressed with this text—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!" And I felt called upon to supplicate that, as we experience the truth of this in the works of creation, so we might more and more know that great and marvellous are the works of the Lord, *spiritually*.

Fifth-day, 23*rd*.—As usual, our meeting was an exercising

time to me. I am sure it is no light service to have so often to speak on these occasions. This I had to acknowledge, as well as to dwell on the importance of learning in every state to be content, and the necessity of applying this to things temporal and to things spiritual, and in every conflict attendant on the Christian warfare, not only in the great events, but in the minute and daily and hourly occurrences of life. Sweet and tranquil walk by myself, after meeting, to the foot of Cennier, and to take some articles of clothing to my four poor girls. The weather was warm and delicious, and I enjoyed the sweet country, particularly the green meadows under Cennier.

24th.—Read "Barrow" to Elizabeth and Rachel, which we enjoyed. Heard to-day of the death of R. W. of Bristol, and felt comforted in the belief that she was prepared for the awful change. Oh, that we may die the death of the righteous, and our last end be like unto theirs! "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching."

First-day, 26th.—It is remarkable to me how I have been brought into sympathy with each individual of our party: this I felt in a peculiar manner towards dear —— this morning; and the language, "I have a baptism to be baptized with," seemed to come home. We know not the purpose of our present baptisms; whether to prepare us for service in the Church, or for our own refinement, to clothe us with that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. Afterwards a pleasant call at F. Grenier's,—I found his wife very poorly, but enjoyed her company.

27th.—Went with Cook after breakfast to visit Nannette and her father, and also two poor widows living together.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO HER BROTHER, JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY.

I really felt quite uneasy at making no effort about the Scriptures here; so I went off on Second-day morning with

Rawlinson, to speak more openly and boldly on the subject to the Abbé. We took a Catholic French Testament and the "Scripture Extracts," which we gave to him; and conversation about schools, &c., led to the subject. The reports of the obstructions to their being known and read are evidently too true, and so bound do the people appear to their priests, that it seems in vain to do anything. The Abbé says it is not forbidden to *give* Testaments, but that it is forbidden to *read* in them without the consent of the confessor. He seems to think that we have very little to do with the Old Testament. His manner, however, was pleasing, humble and kind. It is melancholy—and I am sure *we ought to feel it more so*—to see so many of our fellow-creatures in such a deplorably low condition temporally, and, I cannot but fear, spiritually also. But He that hath the key of David openeth and no man shutteth; and I trust the door of consolation and hope is opened in many hearts when we cannot perceive it.

28*th*.—This day we accomplished an excursion which we have had a long time in view. Gurney, and Agatha, Rawlinson, and I, set off after breakfast. It was an interesting day; the country wonderfully fine; and it forcibly recalled to my mind the days of my youth. It was bright moonlight as we returned home. As we traversed the mountains I enjoyed my own contemplations on the back of my mule.

First-day, Second Month 2nd.—Oh, how I long to be more *willing* to submit to that *nothingness* which it is often my allotment to feel! To be really brought down, and to be truly sensible that we are, of ourselves, naked, blind, &c., is, I believe, one of the hardest lessons which human nature has to learn. O Lord! teach us to become as little children—more humble and more dependent upon Thee. Enable us *so* to come unto Thee, that, in thy beloved Son, we may be made rich, and be clothed upon with the raiment of his righteousness. We had a quiet, sweet meeting, in which my spirit seemed to be with our beloved friends in different parts of England; and before

we separated I believe we were enabled to supplicate for a blessing, not only for ourselves, but for all those who had gathered in the name of the Lord, wherever they might be scattered; that we might *unitedly* be brought to acknowledge *One Father*, "in whom we live and move and have our being," —"one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

4th.—Spent most of the morning in the city. Rawlinson Barclay and I visited again the Abbé at his Institution. He appears much devoted to his religious duties; but the obstruction to the Scriptures being known and read by the Catholics does indeed appear extraordinary. Visit to the Countess, and afterwards to poor families: then an interesting one to F. Grenier, who is very low about his wife. We had some serious conversation, though it is difficult to converse in French.

To her brother Joseph she writes:—

I now have constantly the name of "La Réligieuse" and excite much more curiosity than admiration; and I am so different from the "Réligieuses" of this country, that we are a little afraid that I shall bring those of England into disrepute. As I wander occasionally into the country, dressed in my dark gown and shawl, amongst the poor people in their bright coloured dresses, I often hear a hearty laugh, especially amongst the children; but I pass along very quietly.

Fifth-day, 6th.—I had to express a few words on this most solemn text, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy strength, &c." Our present circumstances appear to me, in a peculiar manner, to call upon us to examine our hearts very closely on this point—whether we are seeking thus to love the Lord our God. Heard of the death of poor D. Grant, the young lady who has been so long ill here. This is the third death in that family within three years. Though I was permitted to feel some spiritual help and consolation this day, yet how *many* valleys have I to pass through, in which I

feel almost bowed down under the sense of my own weakness and infirmities. Oh, that these experiences, which are for the present humiliating and depressing, may be working for my good eventually!

First-day, 9th.—G. B. attended the funeral of D. Grant. This event has been peculiarly affecting, and seems to have brought the subject of death *very home* to us. There was a melancholy over this day. Elizabeth, Rawlinson B. and I took our usual walk over the wooded hill. This was pleasant, and the quiet is always a rest to me. It was some relief to me, before we separated, to be enabled to commend, not only ourselves, but others, especially the afflicted *in this place*, to the mercy of the Lord; that his Spirit may be with them to teach and to console them, and this, under a fresh sense that He who hath the key of David openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth.

TO C. G.

Nice, Second Month 8th.

Hidden and clouded as our prospect was on leaving home, I remember how it was the desire of my heart that unless the Lord's presence went with us, we might not be taken hence, and there have been times in which I have been ready to believe that his presence *has* been with us, and that it has hitherto guided, strengthened, and comforted us. This has been my feeling. Having been mercifully a little uplifted above my own poverty, weakness, and natural lowness, makes me shrink from my return to myself: but this will not do;—I believe we must again and again be brought to the knowledge of ourselves, and, as thou sayest, of our own wretchedness, before we can understand the value, the necessity, and the importance of being brought to Christ, as our Helper and Redeemer. Every fresh experience of ourselves and of life makes us feel that this is our only sure and effectual refuge. I am sure it is necessary to our comfort and spiritual prosperity to be weaned from all

human dependencies, to have every earthly tie shaken, and especially those which our hearts are too apt to cleave to. I am ready to hope that, in some things, this has been a weaning time to me, withdrawn, as I have been, not only from the nearest and dearest natural ties, but, also, from all outward religious dependencies; but I think I never felt the christian bond which may (and which cannot too much) unite us together, stronger or more precious. Let us remember that we must not be too anxious to choose our own duties: I sometimes think the human heart is remarkably deceitful on this very point. Are we not too apt to shrink from denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily? I am not brought fully to understand that the human heart is desperately wicked; but I think I have quite discovered that it is prone to evil, and that it is deceitful. I truly desire thy encouragement in every good word and work, little and great. Thou knowest that I want thee more and more, my dearest C., to think it worth while to exercise the christian principle in the least, as well as in the greatest occurrences of life. I know that it ought to influence and to govern *all* our thoughts, words, and deeds; and I am sure if I wish it for *thee*, I wish for it and want it for *myself*.

11*th*.—Spent the day pleasantly with the A's, but it is difficult to get much beyond the surface of things. Walked home in the evening, having fir-apples for our lanterns.

12*th*.—The Countess came to have her picture taken by Jane. I sat by and enjoyed her company. She gave us an interesting account of the Abbé in his youth. Called on the Greniers. Walked in their garden with their sister, and had some conversation on the state of religion in Switzerland, and on their "Church." The circumstances of the Grants, during the whole of this week, excited much my feeling and sympathy.

15*th*.—Visit from the Abbé de Cesolé and his poor girls, which was satisfactory.

16*th*, *First-day*.—After Meeting, Agatha and I paid an

interesting visit to the Grants. It was with some agitation of mind that I entered the house; having been brought under so much feeling for them. We were received cordially.

18*th.*—Parting visit to the Grants—I felt I could not leave without saying a few words to them: so, before we rose, I said I hoped it was not too great a liberty for a stranger to express an earnest desire that the blessing of the Lord might be with them—that He might be their refuge and strength, and present help in every trial—that the Spirit of the Lord might be their Comforter, their Guide, their Strength under every affliction. There was a solemn and sweet feeling which was more than words, and I felt that we parted in christian love. It was a time of mental conflict, and my heart seemed afterwards to overflow with thankfulness in having again been sensible of His power, who yet sustains and helps us in our weakness, and who makes a way where we can see no way. In this power we can sometimes acknowledge that, though of ourselves we can do nothing, yet all things are possible with God. A sweet note from M. Grant (the widower) in the evening, which was comforting and encouraging to me.

19*th.*—The departure of the Grants from Nice this morning was affecting, as the close of our communication had also been.

20*th.*—"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." This has often appeared to me one of the most difficult lessons, and one the most contrary to our natures to learn. Not only do we experience that we are not to be satisfied with the things of time, but we are often not permitted *sensibly* to partake of that "bread which cometh down from heaven." This is a difficult lesson, because the Word of God in our hearts leads into an entire surrender of ourselves to His will; it convinces of sin, it manifests that of ourselves we are wretched, miserable, blind and naked; it teaches a *humbling* lesson, and *therefore* contrary to our nature. I could not but believe that, in the present time, some, if not all, among us, are

called upon to experience this truth, that "man doth not live by bread alone." I desire the encouragement of those who may be brought to this experience. Those who are willing to learn this lesson shall, in due time, know that his "words they are spirit and they are life." After meeting, I visited the grave of D. Grant with G. A. and E. After standing round the grave in silence I had to supplicate that, seeing that in the midst of life we are in death—that all flesh is as grass—the Word of our God might so far prevail in our hearts that we might know it to abide for ever—that, through the Spirit, we might so live and believe in Christ, as to know Him to be *our* Resurrection and our Life—and not only for ourselves had we to supplicate, but for the afflicted and bereaved family, that their sufferings might lead them to the blessed knowledge that their Redeemer liveth, and that the Lord might, in all things, guide them by his counsel, and afterward receive them into glory. . . . . I have had to acknowledge that, in the spiritual exercises of the past week, which have not been light ones to me, "the Lord is my Helper"—that his Spirit is yet a sure guide and an all-sufficient support. Oh, that I may be enabled, more and more, to live according to his instructions!

First-day, 23rd.—One of our quiet and solemn meetings, in which I believe we were enabled unitedly to draw near to the throne of grace, and in my mind there seemed a renewed sense that we have a "High Priest who is passed into the heavens, who ever liveth to make intercession for us."

To S. G. she wrote at this time:—

I fully agreed with thee in what thou sayest of the Spirit and Inward Teacher given to all. You may perhaps think that I have dwelt too much on the importance of spreading the Scriptures; the reason is that I have felt it the *only* thing we *can* do here. There appears to me, among the Catholics, so very little opening for any other means of communication; but I never felt more deeply convinced of the importance and

efficacy of the work of the Spirit on the heart, than in the experience of this journey, and never more truly valued that principle which leads to an entire submission to its guidance, its teaching, and its baptism.

24th.—I felt the prospect of taking leave of the Greniers. A. and I spent some time with them in the afternoon, and had, I hope, a satisfactory parting. I believed it right to express a few words in prayer in English. I felt more power than usual to utter some expressions in French afterwards. We parted affectionately.

Third Month 2nd.—Spent a comfortable and industrious day. A letter from M. Grant (the bereaved husband) to A., from which I felt some encouragement.

An extract from this letter affords one amongst many evidences, frequently occurring, that Priscilla Gurney was a messenger of Divine good to those by whom she was surrounded, and, wherever her lot was cast, her light shone brightly before men. "I hope," says M. Grant, "that Mr. Barclay and your cousin will keep their intention of seeing Marseilles before they return home, and that we shall have the pleasure of seeing them there. The conduct of your amiable cousin, the day before we left Nice, has made a deep impression on every member of this family, and I can hardly express how very much we were affected by it, or how grateful we shall ever feel to her."

TO WILLIAM AND ANNA FORSTER.

Nice, Third Month 5th.

I have had much satisfaction in being with dear Jane and Rachel, as well as the rest of our little circle; and we have been, to my feelings, very sweetly and comfortably united together. I believe it will now be a relief to my mind to resign my charge

to my beloved uncle and aunt, and to return to my own post at home. I feel truly obliged to thee, dear William, for thy few lines of exhortation and encouragement to me: they have been particularly seasonable at this time. I hope to have your continued sympathy, and to be remembered by you; for indeed, I often feel that I need in a peculiar manner the help spiritually of my friends; though I am sure I have no cause for complaint, but, indeed, very great occasion for thankfulness in the many and unmerited blessings which are granted me; and I have felt renewedly sensible of this in my situation here, and in the long and distant separation from my dear Friends, and from my beloved family.

A prospect of visiting the Friends of Congenies, &c., though one not by any means clear as to how it will turn out, is one of considerable weight and seriousness to me; but I have not felt easy to leave France without visiting them. I am not inclined to be very anxious on the subject, believing that if the thing be right, the way will somehow be made for it. It seems almost in vain to look on the right hand, or on the left, or to expect the approbation of man on the one side or the other. I believe it would not be of so much consequence to us if our eye were really kept single towards our dear Lord and Master; at least I feel this much myself, and I well know that this is what I want very far more of.

P. G. here mentions paying a social visit to the country seat of the Countess de Cesolé; several of the party also took a ride to Falacone and St. André.

6th.—Agatha and Jane brought home a pilgrim. He had a beautiful countenance. He was going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

7th.—We received an agreeable visit from the Abbé de Cesolé. I walked alone before dinner, and sat on a hill enjoying the beautiful country and the views of the sea. Felt much in the prospect of leaving this place.

14th.—Went into Nice with the Countess, to call on the poor widow.

15th.—Rode with E. and G. to Villa Franca and the Bay of Hospice.

First-day, 16th.—A comfortable meeting. Felt the language of our Saviour to the disciples in the storm, "Peace, be still." Visited a sick lady, and read the Bible to her, and had some satisfactory conversation with the family. Took leave of the old widow, &c.

First-day, 23rd of Third Month. One of those days in which I had much, very much, to feel. It was our last meeting together, and an occasion to be remembered. It seemed right for me to address a few words to each individual of the circle; which, under a great sense of weakness, was indeed no light service; but I felt that I was helped and supported through all. Visit to the A's and a comfortable reading with the invalid; afterwards had a sweet walk home by myself. A satisfactory reading in the evening; after which I had to express a few words to the servants. On retiring this evening I desire to feel thankful in having been carried through this day.

24th.—Chiefly engaged in making preparations for my departure.

25th. This day was devoted to paying farewell visits to the Count and Countess; afterwards, with the latter, to the Abbé at his institution, and had quite a sweet parting with him. Our dinner was low, and we all felt agitated at the prospect of the arrival of my uncle and aunt. Before we separated I felt bound in spirit to supplicate (vocally) that He who had sustained us in every conflict would be with us, would yet strengthen and comfort us. Interesting visit to the A's. I had to express my desire for them, that all their afflictions might work for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

26th.—The arrival of my dear uncle and aunt and Emma was

one of those very affecting events not soon to be forgotten. They came about ten. It was overwhelming to our natural feelings to meet them again. We are all cast down, and very low.

In reference to this deeply touching re-union of the bereaved family, the reader will scarcely need to be reminded of the solemn event that had occurred during their separation, which had removed from them the only surviving son and brother; or of the mournful anticipation that their beloved Rachel would soon follow to the grave the two dear youths whom they had been called to resign. But, most bitter as was their cup of life, during years of sorrow and anxiety, the power of christian faith was remarkably exemplified in the meek submission with which there was a surrendering to Divine disposal the treasured objects most dear to their hearts. How animating and instructive is it to follow these afflicted individuals; to mark especially how, in the strength of his gracious Lord, the honoured head of that circle was sustained, and under every circumstance enabled to dedicate himself and his all to the service of Christ. Priscilla's journal proceeds:—

Fifth-day, 27th.—My uncle said a few words after breakfast, expressing his thankfulness for the spiritual blessing bestowed in every situation. . . . . We all met at meeting. My uncle spoke beautifully on the wells of water, of the sound to be heard at a distance when we could not always fully partake of them. I afterwards walked to the sea shore.

First-day, 30th.—An interesting, but painful day to me; yet we passed through it as comfortably as we could expect, under our present circumstances.

On this day one of the Romish festivals was celebrated, and P. G. describes it:—

Numbers of people were carrying branches of palm, olives, and laurels, to be blessed by the bishop. This renders them, in the view of the people, *sacred*, and they are kept as precious possessions in their houses, to protect them against all evil and mischief. The ceremony and outward show in the Catholic church are, I must say, extraordinary to me. We had a comfortable meeting—my uncle beautiful in prayer for the true church. I afterwards paid a visit with my aunt to the A's; then, with A. B., to take a second farewell of the Cesolés. At the close of our reading, I felt as though I could not leave them without offering the language of supplication on their behalf.

CHAPTER II.

1817—1818.

PRISCILLA GURNEY QUITS NICE—VISITS THE FRIENDS AT CONGENIES, ETC.—RETURNS TO ENGLAND—ATTENDS THE YEARLY MEETING IN LONDON—RETURNS TO EARLHAM—DEATH OF RACHEL GURNEY—CORRESPONDENCE—MARRIAGE OF JOSEPH JOHN GURNEY—BENEVOLENT OCCUPATIONS AT HOME—RELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENTS IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND HUNTINGDONSHIRE—GENERAL VISIT TO THE MEETINGS OF FRIENDS IN IRELAND—YEARLY MEETING IN DUBLIN—IN LONDON—RETURNS HOME.

It was very affecting to Priscilla Gurney's tenderest feelings to bid farewell—as it proved—for the last time to her beloved cousin Rachel, whom she had watched with such anxious solicitude.

For several months she had believed it would be right for her to take a rather different route on her journey homeward, and to visit Congenies and those places in its vicinity where the principles of the religious Society of Friends were professed by a small company of interesting persons. We return to her journal.

Third Month 31*st.*—I left them early, after I had visited them all in their rooms. I enjoyed the quiet rest of the day's journey: the country and weather delightful. At Antibes we stayed some time. A. R. Barclay (who was her attendant) having to procure passports, I gave away several Testaments and a number of tracts, especially amongst some soldiers. In the evening we walked by moonlight to the Amphitheatre at Frejus.

Fourth Month 1*st.*—From Frejus to Luc to breakfast, and before night reached Aix, where we were kindly received and well remembered. The books I had given appear to have been valued and carefully kept. The situation of Aix is very beautiful. From Aix to Port Royal on the 2nd: there we left our old road and came to "St." Remy, a very striking place. The costumes of the people are pretty. We visited the Roman arch near the Tower—the scene highly beautiful: thence to Nismes. I had some conversation with the landlady of the hotel, who is a Protestant: I gave her a Bible. It appears, from her account, that the Protestants here have suffered much at different times, and numbers of them lost their lives about a year and a half ago. Many families are without the Scriptures.

3*rd.*—After a very early breakfast we came forward to this place (Congenies). My heart sank a little, feeling the weight of this visit in prospect. Louis Majolier met us at his door, and we received a very kind welcome. The remainder of the day occupied by calls from the Friends who came in to see me. A low night. I felt in some degree dismayed, till I was again permitted to partake of a little of that peace which can quiet every storm.

4*th.*—After breakfast we visited P. Benezet and his wife, and several other families of the Friends. I was enabled to express my desire for them, in French, that they might acknowledge one Lord, be established in one faith, and be baptized by one baptism. I felt some degree of satisfaction in these visits; paid others in the evening, seeing many Friends who flocked around us.

First-day, 6*th.*—The meetings were, on the whole, comfortable; though I longed for more quiet, inwardly and outwardly. We walked after dinner to Louis Majolier's vineyard. I enjoyed the company of the Friends.

7*th.*—I walked with the two little boys to a mill upon the hill. After breakfast we visited several families, and a number of Friends from the neighbouring villages came to see us.

8*th.*—Went to Fontana to visit an aged Friend and her

family. I enjoyed my ride on the ass, and had some interesting conversation with Antoine Brun.

9th.—Two family visits, and afterwards met all the Majolier family, which was interesting and relieving to me. Leave-taking and departure for "St." Giles, accompanied by Louis M. and one of his daughters. The meeting at Giles not soon to be forgotten. It was a time of deep feeling to me.

We may here introduce an extract from the notes of the journey kept by her cousin A. R. B.

Congenies, Third Month 4th.

At seven in the evening, the meeting took place in the large room adjoining Louis Majolier's house: Priscilla spoke with much sweetness in the French language with little apparent difficulty, and for some time, and I am told was generally understood. These poor Friends are engaged mostly in the hard and laborious employment of the culture of the vine. Their vineyards are dug with the hand, a spade resembling a bat being used for the purpose; so that hard labour from an early hour in the morning seems to be the order of the day.

5th.—During one of our visits this morning some few words were uttered in French, in supplication, by Priscilla Gurney, during which some of those present seemed to be much affected. After supper this evening at Louis Majolier's, some portion of the Scriptures were read to our party, which was increased in number by the presence of most of the Friends in the village, so that we were about thirty or forty in number. It was a pleasing and interesting sight to see them all thus assembled. Cheerful conversation followed till the party separated to retire to rest. It was a pretty sight to see dear Priscilla surrounded by the young and old of the party, who seemed delighted with her; her own lively countenance in the midst of the group, beaming with christian affection and sweetness.

9th.—We passed over a flat country to Giles. At the meeting Priscilla spoke in exhortation and supplication; she

was particularly earnest at almost every visit on the subject of reading the Scriptures in their families.

In the afternoon, after parting with our dear friends, we proceeded to Nismes. Saw the Roman antiquities with L. M. in the evening.

11*th.*—Saw the gardens and temple of Diana. Travelled on to Pont du Gard; thence to Avignon, where we had the comfort of meeting Gurney Barclay from Nice, and of hearing a satisfactory account of the dear party there.

12*th.*—We had a comfortable day's journey to Valence.

13*th.*—Reached Lyons to lodge. How did I feel all that has passed since we were there before!

14*th.*—We were detained until one o'clock, in consequence of some repairs being required to our chariot wheels. We reached Maçon. It has been a pleasant easy day.

The travellers proceeded through Autun, Auxerre and Melun, to Paris, where they arrived on the 18th. Here they found the weather "bitterly cold."

We visited the Museum, which is a wonderful collection of the productions of nature, also the Jardin des Plantes. Dined with a French family, which was an effort to me—meeting with several ladies who could not speak English,—but we had an agreeable evening.

19*th.*—Left Paris after we had visited the Foundling Hospital. Reached Abbeville in the evening: enjoyed our comfortable hotel and our approach to our own country.

First-day, 20*th.*—I felt anxious not to travel on this day without a very sufficient motive. The wind was excessively cold: I walked a little with a lively French girl.

On the 20th, they reached Calais in the evening, and, finding a vessel about to sail for England, they hastened on board "leaving the French shores, not without strong emotions and many touching recollections."

I felt, in reviewing the months that we had spent in that country, how much we had to be thankful for. I was in some measure made sensible that the Everlasting Arm had been underneath to sustain; and in examining the past, I was, I believe, humbled under the consideration that we had done but *little* to promote the cause of the Lord, and but little for the good of our fellow-creatures, who seem indeed to stand in need of help in these countries, both in spiritual and temporal things: but I felt a desire, as I have often done during my residence in that foreign land, that a blessing might attend our *little* services —even the blessing of Him who alone can give the increase. After a favourable passage, we landed at Dover. The change to our own country was exceedingly pleasant and very striking, almost as much so as our first impressions on landing in France. The people looked more solid, and everything seemed more comfortable. We travelled through the night to London; the atmosphere and influence of which were oppressive to my feelings. I went to Mildred Court,—very unexpectedly to them. We were rejoiced to meet again. Next day to dear Louisa at Hampstead, where we spent an interesting time together. I stayed in and around London until after the Yearly Meeting, when we heard of an accident having befallen our brother Cunningham: Joseph and I went immediately to Pakefield, where I remained about a week assisting to nurse him: and reached my own dear home about the middle of the Sixth Month, after an absence of about nine months.

Thus was concluded the disinterested labour of this lengthened period of anxiety and change; throughout the whole of which Priscilla Gurney was devoted to the service of God, and to the help of the afflicted and the needy. Truly she manifested, under every dispensation, that her spirit was deeply imbued with the truth, "Ye are not your own." May every one who traces the circumstances of her life, short as it was and closely filled up in the perform-

ance of duty, be impressed by the admonition, "Go thou and do likewise." *Varied* are the *requirements* and *opportunities* of service in the great harvest-field; yet each individual is called to "work while it is day."

Priscilla Gurney received, soon after her arrival in London, a rather poor account of her beloved cousin Rachel, who had been so long the object of her tenderest solicitude. A letter from Joseph Gurney, dated Nice, Fourth Month 15th, says:—

Our dear Rachel continues yet to struggle with her malady. She views her situation as doubtful, and is humbled, yet not fearful under it; loathing her past life, yet trusting in mercy: indeed it has been sweet to sit by her; and I hope natural affection may not mislead us into the belief that she has not striven in vain to make her peace with her Maker; resting in faith on the merits and necessity of a Redeemer.

As the spring advanced her weakness and disease increased, and she, as well as her beloved parents and sisters, became fully aware of her very critical state; and, early in the Fifth Month, symptoms of rapid decline indicated that the close was approaching: and her father wrote:—

Yesterday was a day of great conflict. In recalling the sentiment of speedy danger her mind (quite clear) seemed at liberty to address us individually, with a strong and clear voice. She was very emphatic in her advice, particularly I thought to E.; but, of herself, she spoke of being oppressed with the burden of disobedience; and yet not without a gleam of hope in mercy. In the afternoon she supplicated, "Cast me not off from thy presence, &c:" and craved that if, in the end, a clearer earnest of the future were not vouchsafed to her, no murmuring spirit might be suffered to arise. She sent her love and many particular messages to her relations and friends. . . . .

She felt grateful to —— for his kindness, and for the help he had been made to her, and earnestly desired for him that he would follow what she was certain he knew to be right for him, —said that he would be subject to many temptations and allurements to draw him from it, but that if he kept firm it would lead him to eternal glory.

Three weeks after the above was written, this dear young friend was favoured peacefully to pass away into the invisible world. One of her cousins announced the event to Priscilla Gurney:—

Nice, June 1st, 1817.

You must be fully prepared to hear that our beloved Rachel is released from all her sufferings. The awful scene closed this morning,—I think I may add, with an assurance that she is at rest. I know we have had your truest sympathy and your heart with us. Would that you were here in reality.

Her sister Jane writes to P. G. and G. B.—

We have many and great consolations. Our loss is unspeakable, but her gain is inconceivable too, and her sufferings ended for ever; and we remember, as we always must do, that you did greatly soothe them.

Of the funeral, which took place on the following Third-day, Jane Gurney, jun. says:—

My mother attended it. We had to walk about a mile, part of the way through orange-gardens, and part upon the high road. There was no crowd, and nothing could exceed the stillness and order of the whole time. The ground is enclosed by a wall, retired from the road, and not far from the sea. There are several gravestones in it, with cypresses planted round them. At the grave (which is next to poor dear Grant's) my dear father, after a solemn pause, expressed his belief in the blessedness of his beloved child; in her justification through faith, and

sanctification through Christ; that this belief alone could enable parents to give up the child of their bosom, and yet raise the voice of thanksgiving and praise. He enforced the necessity of an inward and spiritual religion; a dependence upon God as our Teacher, rather than on man. The body was then laid in the grave; all its afflictions over, and the spirit, we may believe, freed and joyful.

Her father, in a letter to some others of the family, penned a few days afterwards, says, referring to the last hours of nature's conflict:—

I found her quite sensible; and though it was difficult for her to articulate, yet with words and signs she made herself understood; suffering at times (but I trust not greatly) to the end, when her countenance bespoke, as well as other proofs throughout her illness, that her prayer had been heard, and that "no murmuring spirit" had been "suffered to arise." Our loss is, indeed, a very heavy one; and though we have witnessed sufferings which have caused us (as it were) to bleed at every pore, and led us to desire a release from them, yet, when the time of separation arrived, when this beloved child was to be resigned into the hand of Him who bestowed on us the precious gift, the anguish was, and is, keen. But I trust I can in measure rejoice that her pains are at an end, and still more in the belief that her purified spirit is at rest with her Saviour. Her last illness has evinced that she has been under His holy guidance, and her chief desire was to do his will. And this desire was not confined to herself, but for all those connected with her. She addressed those about her, separately and emphatically, *strongly recommending the cross to be borne*, and lamenting for herself that she had not taken it up *earlier*. Afterwards she supplicated for herself, concluding in the words of the Psalmist, "At thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." I hope ever to remain thankful that I have been permitted to be with her.

PRISCILLA GURNEY TO H. C. BACKHOUSE.

Pakefield, Seventh Month 1st, 1817.

The close of our dearest Rachel's sufferings and conflicts has been more interesting to me than I know how to express, but attended with sensible consolation, for which we may, indeed, well be thankful. I have found (and increasingly) that it is not all the words of consolation in the world that will avail at such a time; but to be permitted to experience a little faith that the change is a happy one is a precious feeling, and something of it has attended me on account of dear Rachel. The remembrance of her is accompanied with uncommon sweetness and peace, and I have at times felt the belief that her spirit is returned to her Saviour. I have lately had such an acute sense of the cares of life,—of the difficulties from without and from within, which attend our running with patience the race set before us,—that it is consoling to remember, and to bear in mind, those that we humbly hope are for ever at rest—those who have weathered the storm, and have entered the haven.

Shortly after Priscilla Gurney's return to Earlham, she received, from several persons on the continent, interesting letters, expressing, in affectionate and earnest language, a grateful remembrance of her sympathising and pious labours to promote their well-being. Several of these communications were addressed to her by the Friends of Congenies and its vicinity, and appear to give evidence of the correctness of her views respecting them, as she had described them in a note that related some interesting circumstances:—

There was manifested by many of them a strong love for the Truth as it is in Jesus, and a desire for the attainment of that experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ which is life eternal. They appeared a good deal separated from the world, and were simple and pleasing in their manners.

On 17th of Sixth Month, Priscilla Gurney, in a letter to her endeared sister Elizabeth Gurney, says :—

I feel in a tranquil, peaceful state of mind, and I hope not quite insensible to the many enjoyments and comforts with which we are surrounded. In returning to England I have afresh felt the importance of our seeking, in humility and simplicity, to keep our places, both for our own sakes, for the Society, and for the dear children who will be looking to us for examples. . . . . I do indeed believe that a blessing will attend us if we are concerned to persevere, and to increase in faithfulness and dedication in *little* and in *great* things. . . . . If William Allen should go to France, I feel very desirous that he should furnish himself with Bibles and Testaments to distribute, as well as tracts. Have you ever thought of publishing some extracts from Fenelon and Thomas à Kempis, in the form of a tract? I really think it might be very useful to the French Catholics.

On the 25th of Eighth Month she wrote* to her beloved niece Katherine Fry—

Since your departure from Earlham I have wished to write to thee, but have not had leisure to employ myself so agreeably. I have, however, thought very often of you all. I suppose you pass your time in reading, study, and working together. Since I saw thee I have made a little visit to R. It was indeed a very agreeable one, and I was much pleased with the garden, there are so many fine flowers and fruits. I like much the situation of the house, in the midst of the cottages of the poor. I have not seen your school, because, during the time that I remained at your house, the scholars were not assembled. Hast thou begun to instruct the poor children at Plashet on the First-day? I know thou hadst the intention to do so when thou left us, and I wish to know if thou hast executed thy

* In French.

project. My dear K., at thy age, thou hast much to learn, and it is necessary to be very diligent, and never to lose time. I advise thee always to employ thy time in the best manner that thou canst, and thou will never have to regret it. We are now much occupied in making preparation for thy uncle Joseph's marriage. The house is nearly in a state to receive our new sister. Our family will find a great change from this marriage, and without doubt it will procure for us much pleasure.

The marriage alluded to in this letter was accomplished in the following month. It was an event that caused great satisfaction and joy to pervade the whole circle, and was an especial source of comfort to Priscilla Gurney. She thus writes of it to William and Anna Forster, Ninth Month 12th, 1817, from Runcton :—

I must give you some account of our sweet wedding. It is a comfort to have it over, and to have our dearest Joseph married, and so much according to his heart's desire. The meeting was solemn, and a very sweet influence prevailed, such an one as made us feel it was an union truly in the Lord, and gave the encouraging hope that his blessing was with them in it. Dearest Betsy supplicated for them in a manner which seemed much felt by those present, and dear Joseph afterwards, in a few words, but with much weight. The day passed very quietly and comfortably; the weather was very sweet; and the place particularly agreeable for such an occasion. In the evening the party separated various ways: our dear pair went on their way towards Earlham, where we now imagine them enjoying themselves.

TO HER SISTER FRY, A WEEK AFTER THE WEDDING.

Earlham, 2nd.

The emotions on my reaching Earlham are strange and new indeed. Everybody has felt the change, all the servants look as if they had; but there appears to me to have been a most sweet and, we may say, almost a sanctified influence over it. The Everlasting Arm appears, I think, in a remarkable manner to have been underneath from the commencement to the completion of their union.

The accustomed avocations of Priscilla Gurney—visiting the infirm and sick, attendance at schools, which she had been the chief instrument in establishing, and the higher duties of frequenting the religious meetings at home, and in other districts of her own Quarterly Meeting—occupied the Autumn months of 1817. Early in the Twelfth Month she left home, with the concurrence of her friends, in order to visit the meetings of Friends in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. At Wisbeach, on the 13th of that month, she writes:—

I felt something of the depth of lowness at this time and in the night; not only from the weight of the service, but from those peculiar conflicts which I have had of late to pass through.

14*th*, *First-day*.—Meeting at Wisbeach, solemn, and, I may thankfully acknowledge, relieving to my mind; but I have seldom been made more sensible of my poverty and inability. The subject on my mind arose from the text, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"—applicable to us, as well as to the disciples formerly. A solemn query, *Are ye able?* Inasmuch as we share the sufferings of our blessed Redeemer, are we, through his Spirit, made able and willing? Supplicated afterwards that, if it might be needful for us to pass through tribulation before we enter into the kingdom of God, the Lord

would support and sustain us, and grant us a portion of that peace which shall be perfected in heaven; for the few Friends here, that this support may be granted in all their conflicts and temptations, so as to be "made more than conquerors, through Him who hath loved us." The afternoon meeting was remarkably sweet and encouraging to my feelings: I had to address this language to the few present—"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,"—that if of his flock they had nothing to fear,—and on the importance of examining whether we have reason to believe that we are partakers of this privilege: what are the peculiar blessings of those who belong to this flock, and know Christ to be their Shepherd? After the family reading, I expressed my desire for them that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ might be with them,—this I had especially to apply to the young people. A sweetness has prevailed through the day, and I feel thankful in having been so far helped.

Second-day.—Before our separation this morning our hearts were, I trust, united in solemn supplication for the blessing of the Lord, in an especial manner for the family we were with,—for the young people, that they might come to be more and more labourers in the vineyard, and that the Lord would be with us in our various callings, strengthen and help us. Rode to March with the Peckovers. Interesting meeting there,—a number of poor people. I felt as if something of the *true life* were stirring amongst them, and had to address them from the words, "Lord, we have left all and have followed thee,"—with my apprehension that some present might almost adopt this language. Then had they not to experience, even when their flesh and their heart faileth, the Lord to be the strength of their heart and their portion for ever? I had also to speak of our peculiar privileges in withdrawing from all outward things, and being permitted to enter as into the sanctuary of the Lord. If called upon to give up the world, let us be encouraged *to do so*, remembering the words of our blessed Redeemer, "My peace

I give unto you." . . . *. I felt this to be a day of deep spiritual exercise,—not only from the services in which I was engaged, but also from my own peculiar trials at this time, which call for much patience and submission. *

Fourth-day.—Called on some Friends. I felt the great privilege of the domestic comfort and good order which so conspicuously prevail amongst Friends. The meeting interested me much. Many serious people were present. A quiet solemnity seemed to prevail over them. I had to speak on this text, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write," and of the experience of the disciples formerly. They were led to expect the Messiah and to feel the need of a Redeemer,—they rejoiced to find Him. This also applied to those present: had they not also found their Saviour? Such were encouraged to follow Him, to take up their daily cross, and to deny themselves. I had also to express my desire that they might be more fully brought into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ; abiding in Him in spirit, so as to bring forth much fruit. The afternoon was occupied in calling on several of the Friends. Much sweetness and true simplicity were, I thought, conspicuous. I felt, as I entered a little cottage, the force of these words,—"The blessing of the Lord maketh truly rich." I had to express my hope that, through faith and obedience, they would increasingly become partakers of this blessing. . . . . I felt much exhausted and fatigued this evening, but I hope thankful in having been carried through another day.

Fifth-day.—At Earith.—Felt low and cast down; but in the meeting had to speak on the *living waters.*—"If thou hadst asked of me, I would have given thee living water." The invitation still goes forth, "Ho! every one that thirsteth!" Our journey through life may be compared to the Israelites. To those whose trust is in the Lord the waters are "driven

* She had in prospect a religious visit to Friends in Ireland, which weighed heavily and solemnly upon her spirit.

back, the mountains skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs." My dear uncle and aunt joined us before meeting, which was remarkably solemn, and I felt the silence to be quieting and composing to my soul. Before the meeting closed, I had to remind them of the disciples in the storm, and the Master's gracious language, "Peace, be still;" exemplified in our own experience, the power of the Redeemer being known amongst us to quiet every storm, to enlighten our darkness, and to strengthen us in weakness—encouragement to sit at his feet. Lodged at L. Squire's—a sweet family—several little children. I had to exhort them to perseverance in every labour of love towards their dear children.

Sixth-day.—Quarterly Meeting. Many ministers present. My dear uncle spoke on the importance of bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit; to which I added the apostle's injunction, "Examine yourselves, prove your own selves, whether ye be in the faith;" and on the necessity and importance of this serious examination in every situation in life. *The test is,* Is Christ in us? What do we know of him as our Redeemer? What do we know of reconciliation with the Father, through Him; of his bearing our transgressions?—Where are the fruits in us of his Spirit? I had to go into the men's meeting—a close trial of faith—addressed them on the salutation of the apostle, "Finally, brethren, be perfect, be of one mind, *live in peace,* and the God of love and peace shall be with you." At the close of the women's meeting, I expressed a few words of encouragement to the tried servants of the Lord,—"Let patience have its perfect work," hold fast confidence in the Lord Jesus; for "they that endure unto the end shall be saved."

First-day.—Meeting at Downham, which was interesting. I felt inexpressibly my poverty and darkness; but in this state I felt the power of the Spirit to arise. I was engaged in supplication that those who had put their hand to the plough might be preserved from looking back. Afterwards, I had to speak on these words,—"By their fruits ye shall know them.

Do men gather grapes of thorns," &c. What are the fruits of the good seed?—Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, &c. How far are they produced in us? Our situation in life is not the thing to be considered; but this single question applicable to *all, Do we abide in Christ?* They that abide in Christ shall indeed be fruitful branches.

Second-day, 22nd Twelfth Month.—Returned to Earlham with the C.'s, for whom I felt afresh interested. In reviewing this little journey, I have reason to acknowledge that I have found strength to be given in weakness, and experienced the Lord to be a present helper in the needful time. I have also felt encouraged in my visits to these Friends, believing that He in whom is life is near to many of them. It was pleasant to see some in little cottages, which gave me the feeling of being peaceful habitations. My prevailing desire for them has been, and is, that they may be ever kept on the true and only foundation, Christ Jesus the Lord: that he may be unto them the Way, the Truth and the Life. In the evening I attended our Norwich select meeting, and had to say a few words on the language of Peter,—"Lord, I will lay down my life for thy sake;" and on the danger of afterwards denying Christ.

23rd.—Quarterly Meeting. This might be truly called a solemn day, and one in which the presence of the Lord seemed to own us. I had to address the meeting on those words,—"To you who believe He is precious, but to the disobedient a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence;" also, on the preciousness of the Redeemer to the penitent sinner, to the afflicted, and, finally, to those who are brought to the bed of sickness, and to the hour of death. But what is the hope of those to whom the cross of Christ is a stumbling-block? Encouragement to those who, through faith, have known Christ to be precious to their souls, and warning to those who still stumble at his word: with my earnest desire for us all that we may be so brought to the Redeemer, as to know his preciousness here

and hereafter. I had to lay my concern for visiting Ireland before the women, and then before the men Friends. The time in the men's meeting was one of deep solemnity. Dearest Joseph supplicated for me in a pathetic and feeling manner, for my support and consolation in this service, and that if it be consistent with the Lord's will, I might be restored to them in peace. My heart was deeply affected; but the voice of the Lord had been mightier to my soul than the noise of many waters. I had to leave with our men Friends these few words,—"Say unto Jerusalem, fear not; and unto Zion, let not thine hands be slack." The women's meeting concluded with supplication that we might yet *know* in all future seasons, when collected together, or when separated, that "the Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear grown heavy that it cannot hear." Dined at the Grove, and we passed a sweet evening, in much love and harmony. As I was reflecting on the past day, I felt as if it had been a wedding-day to me; though no *earthly* marriage indeed. I was thinking it was just as if all my dear friends had been signing my marriage certificate. I was engaged in these thoughts when my dear uncle Joseph broke the silence, by saying, "Well! this day has been to my feelings like a wedding-day, a day of espousals, a day of solemn covenant with our God!" He then expressed how very sweet and heavenly an influence had been spread over us; desiring that we might pay our vows and keep our covenants. It was particularly striking to me. I prayed that this day of visitation might be blessed to us.—Dearest Lord! if this day has been, indeed, as a wedding-day to me—not temporally but spiritually—if I have had afresh to enter into a solemn covenant with Thee, then be Thou with me, weaning my wandering affections from earthly things, and set them entirely on things above; that I may indeed say, "My heart is fixed." And as Thou seest meet that my longing heart should not be satisfied with anything here below, be pleased to fill up this void with thine own Spirit, and, by the consolations of thy

presence, make the desert of my heart to blossom as the rose. Be the Bridegroom, and the beloved of my soul, that, finally I may find rest and peace and joy, in Thee, my strength and my Redeemer.

Two days later (viz., on the day called Christmas), being the usual week-day meeting at Norwich, Priscilla makes this entry in her journal:—

It was very comfortable and accordant with my feelings to assemble at meeting this morning. The remembrance of this day last year at Nice was very solemn to me. I felt something of that sweet rest and peace at meeting which is like a foretaste of "the rest which remaineth for the people of God."

First Month 1*st*, 1818. *Fifth-day*.—Returned from Cromer, where we had paid an interesting visit to dear Louisa, and arrived in time for meeting, which was quiet and sweet to my feelings. Dear Joseph spoke in a very solemn manner of his own experience of the past year, and on the seriousness of beginning a new one; also, on what had been his hope and consolation in reviewing the year now expired: that he could find *no substantial* hope or consolation but in "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." This, also, our only hope, strength, and consolation for the *future*. The beginning of another year has felt very serious to me, as it has usually been; yet every returning one is increasingly so.

First-day, 4*th*. At meeting, I had to enlarge a little on the parable of the tares and the wheat. It is not for us to judge, or here to separate the tares from the wheat; but it is for us to watch individually over *ourselves*, that the tares be not sown, or suffered to grow up, among the good seed. At the afternoon meeting had to speak on the importance of partaking of the Bread of Life—even of Christ Jesus who came down from heaven, that those who partake of Him, spiritually, may never die. In the latter part of this day, I felt something of very deep conflict, almost tribulation of mind. The division

between earthly and heavenly things has, at times, been a sharp and close trial.

First Month 17*th*.—Of the conflicts which I have passed through in the prospect of visiting Ireland, it is enough to say that they have been peculiar, and very deep. But I desire, also, ever to remember that, in the midst of many infirmities and many sorrows, the Everlasting Arm has been underneath to sustain; and I trust that the fruits have been, to have my heart more simply fixed on Christ as my only Saviour, and on his Spirit as my only effectual Comforter.

First-day, 18*th*.—The meeting at Norwich was solemn. On taking leave of my friends there, I had to remind them of this text,—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." As He is the only sure foundation of our faith and hope, it is well we should examine what we *know* of Christ as our Redeemer. I had again to encourage all my beloved friends to come unto Christ. The meeting ended with supplication for our preservation, faith, &c. We were also, I think, comforted together. In the afternoon meeting, —— prayed for dear Anna Forster* and me unitedly, and in a very impressive manner, that we might be helped, supported and guided—enabled to speak the word in season, according to the ability given; and, according to the example of our blessed Master, to heal the broken-hearted, to comfort those who mourn, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, &c.; that if we were called to go forth weeping, we might be permitted to come again rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us. Then for the Church at large. We have surely often been permitted, when gathered together, to draw near to the throne of grace, through the power of Christ. We dined at home together. There was a sweetness to be felt, and yet a

* Her beloved friend and cousin, Anna Forster, was united with her in the weighty concern to pay a religious visit to the meetings of Friends in Ireland. She was also liberated for the service with the full concurrence of the Monthly and Quarterly Meetings of which she was a member.

melancholy, in the prospect of our long and distant separation. In the evening we had one of our large parties collected in the ante-room. I felt inexpressibly low; but a solemn covering was spread over us; and though I seemed to have but few words to express, yet the secret desire of my heart was, that the intercession of the Spirit might be accepted on behalf of my beloved brothers and sisters, (whether present or absent,) of those who had affectionately and faithfully served us, of all our poor neighbours, and especially on behalf of those who laboured amongst them. How great is our privilege, to be permitted, even under the weight and in the depth of our infirmities, to commend one another unto the Lord.

Second-day, 19th.—Catherine and Rachel went with me to K——, where we dined. We all felt cast down in spirit. They accompanied me to the mail,—*when*, and *how* to meet again, how little do we know! A. S. was my kind companion (to London). I felt tranquil and composed; but still the conflict of giving up home has been a severe one, though not known in its full extent to any mortal, and but to *few* in *any* measure. May it prove as a preparation for the holy service of our dear Redeemer. . . . I enjoyed my quiet corner in the mail, where I had many solemn and affecting thoughts, but mingled with consolation and comfort. The review of the months lately spent at home was interesting—I hope not unprofitable. Many recollections were deeply humbling, and the general result can only be self-abasement. But still, on looking beyond myself, I can acknowledge that, as J. S. said, "The Lord hath covered my head in many battles."

Third-day, 20th.—After arriving, at an early hour, at Stratford, she "walked by moonlight to Upton."

Fifth-day, 22nd.—At meeting I had to say a little on these words—"They that endure to the end shall be saved." How often of late has this language been applicable to my state,—"Why art thou cast down, oh my soul?" Oh, that I may yet

hope in God! Then shall I eventually "praise Him who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

First-day, First Month 25th.—I felt being at Gracechurch Street Meeting. It was an inexpressible effort to me to speak in that meeting; but help is still given to us in our weakness. I felt the same in the afternoon, when I had to speak on that text,—"These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." After meeting, P. B. accompanied us to Islington School, where we spent an interesting evening among the children. I was pleased and encouraged by their orderly and quiet deportment. I examined them in the knowledge of the Scriptures, &c., and was much satisfied with the result. I rejoice that so much care is given to their religious instruction.

26th.—Finished the examination of the girls at Islington: it was very satisfactory.

30th.—Most of the day spent at Islington. At meeting with the children in the morning; I had to speak to them in the language addressed by the angels to the shepherds,—"Behold! I bring you glad tidings of great joy:"—these glad tidings brought to us all—the truth *known* that a Saviour is born unto them by *His work in their hearts*, &c.

Seventh-day, 31st.—All our family party were assembled. I was brought into a deep and tender sympathy with ——. Sometimes we have to know a little what it is to be baptized with others, and, in measure, to partake of their conflicts.

First-day, 1st of Second Month.—Attended Southwark Meeting. Had to speak on the body returning to the dust, and the spirit to God who gave it, and on the *preparation* for the return of the spirit to God.

2nd.—Finished the examination of the boys at Islington School. Afterwards dined at the Wilberforces'.

3rd.—Betsy and I met the Wilberforces at Newgate. Highly interesting visit to the prison: the order of the poor women very encouraging. After all were assembled Betsy

read a chapter, and afterwards prayed for all present. First, for those who had been devoted to the service of God; and then for the prisoners, that through grace they might be delivered from the bondage of sin and made partakers of the glorious liberty of the children of God. We visited the poor women under condemnation; and then the men's side of the prison; which was truly affecting.

4th.—M. S. accompanied me to Wandsworth. After meeting I spent some time at A. M.'s school, where I had some conversation with her and with the girls, on the important subject of a closer application to the Scriptures.

5th.—Our party were assembled together in the evening, which was comfortable to me,—for I had longed to reach a little true spiritual communion before we separated, and I trust we were enabled to press through all outward obstacles and to draw near to the throne of grace, and once more solemnly to commend one another unto the Lord and to his keeping. How do I sometimes feel that if we may be permitted to touch but, as it were, the hem of the garment of our dear Redeemer, there is healing in it,—that power and virtue which cures our diseases and redeemeth the spiritual life from destruction.

First-day, 8th.—I had some satisfactory conversation with Eliza Fry and her children, on religious instruction and a diligent application to the Scriptures.

15th.—At Tottenham Meeting, which was comfortable—many promising young people. I had to address them on these words,—"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob," &c., and on their privilege in being brought up as in a holy inclosure in the fold of the true Shepherd; but also on the necessity of giving "*all diligence*" to make their "calling and election sure." "Many are called but few chosen."

16th.—This was a day of much close conflict to me. Dear Betsy and I spent most of the morning at Newgate, much engaged by the poor convicts left for execution the next day. We sat some time with them; the scene was afflicting. Betsy

and I were united in prayer for them. I deeply felt that a preparation for death is a solemn and *Divine* work. I trust there was some fruit of true repentance. Our visit to the men was a very close exercise of spirit. I had to supplicate that we, and the poor sufferers especially, might be brought *experimentally* and savingly to understand and to partake of the benefit of the sufferings of our Redeemer for sinners. I was much sunk in spirit in the afternoon, and hardly knew how to part from my beloved brothers and sisters. Many of us were assembled at Mildred Court, and we separated under a sweet and soothing influence. Left that evening by the mail for Shrewsbury. My thoughts much with the poor sufferers at Newgate, and also with the beloved friends whom I had parted from; but I felt peaceful and quiet during my journey. Cornelius Hanbury was my kind companion.

18*th.*—We travelled through Wales to Bangor, where we met William and Anna Forster. Reached Holyhead in the evening.

19*th.*—We were cheered a little this morning and I think enabled, with a measure of faith, to commend ourselves again unto Him whom we indeed know to be Lord of the winds and waves, naturally and spiritually.

20*th.*—We reached Dublin harbour about noon. It was a strange feeling on landing to find ourselves in another country. The appearance of the people was different from that of the English. We were kindly welcomed at Robert Fayle's. I felt encouraged by the remembrance of that language, — "The Lord hath delivered thee in six troubles, and in the seventh shall no evil touch thee."

First-day, 22*nd.*—This was an exercising day to us—Dublin Meeting is large. I had to supplicate that the same gospel love that had led us forth might still be shed abroad in our hearts; and not only in ours, but in the hearts of those amongst whom our lot might be cast. We felt it difficult to reach the living seed of the kingdom and the deep waters. In the afternoon a few words were expressed on the importance of

watchfulness. Many Friends assembled to see us in the evening. I often feel much at being anything to be sought after, well knowing my poverty, weakness, and how little I have in myself.

Second-day, 22nd.—Left Dublin for Wicklow, where we were received by Friends who were very kind, hospitable, and easy in their manners. Before we separated at night I longed for us to be brought *at least to the spirit of prayer*, and had to say a few words on the subject.

23rd.—The meeting interesting and relieving. Expressed a little on those words,—"All flesh is grass," &c., "but the Word of the Lord abideth for ever," and on the infinite importance of the Word abiding *in us*. After dinner supplicated for a blessing, and that the Word of the Lord might bring forth fruit for the little community at Wicklow, that their light might shine before the people, who appear to sit "in darkness and in the shadow of death." Returned to Dublin.

26th.—Left Dublin and proceeded to Rathfriland.

The travellers passed through some large towns. The appearance of the poor people whom they had hitherto seen was "oppressive to the spirit, bespeaking much wretchedness and ignorance;" but "the country improves on entering Ulster." After visiting some meetings in that province, they went on to Lisburn, where they attended the Quarterly Meeting: "a day of much weight and solemn feeling;" but P. G. adds—

How have we to experience, day after day, that grace is sufficient for us in our great weakness!

Fourth-day, Third Month 4th.—The ride to Belfast very pleasing: the appearance of the country cheerful and flourishing. At the meeting at Belfast I had to express a little on the inquiring language,—"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord?" &c. He requireth us "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly" before Him. We must be brought to

walk humbly, and with repentance and contrition, before we can see and understand what it is that covers transgression, and before we can behold for ourselves "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." In the evening many Friends came to see us. I continually feel, What have we to give, unless we receive an immediate and constant supply from the Source of all help? After all, what can we do for the salvation of others, but commend them unto the Lord and to "the word of his grace?"

7th.—Returned to Lisburn. Visited several families and the school, about forty children. They appeared nicely cared for. I ventured to give a little advice about reading the Scriptures.

It may be here remarked that the right training of youth, which, as we have seen, was at all times a subject of deep interest with Priscilla Gurney, was, throughout her travels in Ireland, a prominent object of her concern. She saw the great importance of sound religious instruction; and she well knew, from her own happy experience, that to imbue the minds of children and young persons with a knowledge of the Divine law, as developed by the precepts of the gospel and presented to us in Holy Scripture, was the most likely means of instilling the pure principles of christian truth, and that "fear of the Lord" which "is a fountain of life." To encourage the reading of the sacred volume was, therefore, often felt by her to be her *incumbent duty*, and that every obstruction to the faithful fulfilment of it must be surmounted.

First-day, *8th.*—At the morning meeting at Ballinderry. Spoke on these words,—"To the poor the gospel is preached," not only by outward word, but by the anointing: this preaching is saving to those *who believe*,—teaching us of the Redeemer, leading to the Saviour, to his *power* in overcoming and forgiving sin. Evening meeting at Lisburn, which was satisfactory.

9th.—To meeting at Lurgan. Addressed the language of encouragement to the sheep who are of the fold of Christ; though outwardly scattered as having no shepherd, yet He, who is "the good Shepherd," who "gave his life for the sheep," knoweth his own, and is "known of them."

11th.—At Grange. The message which I had to deliver was —"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;"—the necessity of individual repentance and humiliation, which can alone bring us to the experimental knowledge of the Saviour.

12th.—To Rich-hill. These meetings call for a deep travail of spirit; and, according to our little measure, we have to feel it. On the way from Rich-hill to Newry, I gave away many tracts and little books among the people. I have enjoyed much inward peace and consolation, which has been an inexpressible favour. To be brought into a state of resignation and submission under all the circumstances of life is indeed a cause of great thankfulness.

13th.—We returned to Dublin.

15th, First-day.—How have I longed this day, for myself and others, that we may be brought more fully to know Christ as our Saviour, our Resurrection and our Life!

16th.—Very poorly to-day; but visited the Orphan Asylum, an interesting institution, containing one hundred and sixty orphan girls.

17th.—Had a bad night, from a good deal of fever, which made me feel seriously the probability of my being very ill.* This excited, at first, an emotion of some alarm; but I endeavoured to be quiet, and I felt that power to be mercifully near which can wonderfully allay our fears, and quiet every storm.

18th.—I was better, and we proceeded on our journey. I distributed many tracts and little books, which were generally well received. One Catholic threw them back at me. He would neither receive them himself, nor suffer others to take them.

19th.—Reached Edenderry. At meeting, the subject that

* A contagious fever was generally prevalent in Ireland at that time.—Ed.

impressed me was from the passage, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

21*st.*—Came forward to Mountmellick. A day of family visiting, which was exercising to mind and body.

22*nd.*—To the Provincial School, where I had some hours' work in examining the children a little, as to their knowledge of Scripture.

23*rd.*—To Tullamore, where we visited two families.

25*th.*—To Moate. The meeting there to be remembered. I had to express the earnest desire, which did indeed prevail with me, that all might come to the true and effectual knowledge of the Gospel—of the truth as it is in Jesus; and to enlarge on this text,—"I bring you glad tidings," &c., that to us these glad tidings are brought, of "a Saviour who is Christ the Lord," &c. I felt drawn to supplicate that, if any had been carried away, they might be brought back, &c. We afterwards found that an individual was present who had formerly been an acceptable minister; but he was now one of the seceders.*

After visiting the meetings at Ballymurry and Athlone, the travellers returned to Mountmellick, where P. G. says—

Dear Ann Shannon gave us a kind reception, and we dined with her and her school. We heard of a priest at Ballymurry who had ordered sixty Testaments to be burned. His chapel was, on the same, or the next day, burned down. The priests cannot induce the people to part with their *Irish* Testaments. In the evening attended the School Committee.

28*th.*—The Quarterly Meeting. I shall not soon forget the weight of it in prospect; but, from day to day, help and strength have been mercifully afforded to us. I felt deeply impressed with the infinite importance of having a part in Christ, through the washing of regeneration.

* This person was afterwards restored to membership, and died in unity with his friends, and there was good ground to believe that his end was peace.—Ed.

29th.—Meetings, and visit to the Provincial School. The schools have been a peculiar exercise to me. It has been hard work to do that which I felt it right to do. *As the way opens* I must leave a hint here and there; and in this, as in other services, the fruits may and must be left. We had a comfortable time with the heads of the family, and with the boys, after which I felt drawn to supplicate for a blessing upon them. There appears to me hope for the youth of this country. We have endeavoured to do the part assigned us, in exhorting, encouraging and warning.

30th.—Quarterly Meeting for discipline;—lively, to my feelings.

31st.—Rose early, and visited the School. The Friends were warm in their expressions of love and kindness, especially some of the younger people. I expressed a few words of exhortation after the reading. Then to the closing meeting of the Quarterly Meeting. I had much desired that, through submission, and a simple surrendering to the teachings of the Spirit, we might leave this meeting unburdened; and this, through renewed help and unmerited mercy, was permitted to us. The meeting was solemn, and we parted under the influence of Gospel love. I felt as if the Spring had been opened among us, and the flow of the Spirit was more to be felt, both immediately and instrumentally, than has often been the case in this land. Paid several farewell visits, and distributed books, &c.

Whilst at Mountmellick, Priscilla Gurney received from a christian friend in Norfolk the following letter; to which she returned the subjoined reply:—

17th March.

I have my full share of the interest which your labour of love cannot fail to excite in the minds of your friends. All that hath reached me since your departure has had a direct tendency to deepen the interest that the first declaration of your design awakened. Both yourself and your excellent fellow-worker

have learned how to regard events that make large demands on your patience and submission; and I cannot help thinking you will both be taught, from the circumstances of the present mission, to extract a virtue that may prove singularly cheering in the after-stages of your christian journey. I have often thought I should be glad (if overtaken by it in the path of duty) to undergo the terror and agitation of those persons who "reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end," (Psalm cvii.) if it led me to cry unto the Lord in my trouble, and enabled me to see and feel, and know, that He brought me out of my distress. I exceedingly value such experience. . . . .

It has been established as a conviction in my mind, not only that every work of faith and labour of love is accepted of the Saviour, but that absolute good is produced by each in the world, whether we are permitted to see it or not. It is my main design in this letter to tell you how strongly I am persuaded of this in relation to your arduous visitation in Ireland, and how much I wish you may both of you enjoy the same conviction. Seeming impediments are often real helps; and you know, my dear friends, that Jacob was never more mistaken in his life, than when, in reference to some dark providences, he said, "All these things are against me." They were, in fact, all for him.

Mountmellick, Third Month 29th.

My dear Friend,

Meetings, readings, greetings, and the concourse of Friends, are for this day over, and I am very tired to answer thy acceptable letter; but it was too much a word in season to remain unanswered. Anna, as well as myself, were cheered by thy welcome salutation on our way. We felt thy sympathy and thy understanding of our present situation and peculiar trials, as a refreshment. I feel grateful for such a remembrance of us in our journeyings, and in our separation from all our nearest and dearest friends. I think I have seldom felt the

expression of christian unity and sympathy more helpful than during our engagements in this country; and to believe that we have the good desires, and sometimes the prayers, of our friends, has always been a strength and a consolation to me; for this journey has, from various causes, been in a peculiar manner an exercise to faith and patience. How very much do I unite with thee in all thou sayest on that subject; but that thou wert able to give us a word of encouragement and a little exhortation, so applicable, not only to our present situations, but to our present feelings, was very comforting. "I was brought low, and He helped me," has been again and again my experience; and as thou sayest, I believe it is well to be brought to know and to feel the depth of our own unworthiness, poverty, weakness, and helplessness, that we may truly experience the power, love and mercy, of the Redeemer. But to be willing to be brought really low and to be truly humbled is hard work, and often deeply in the cross to our natures. I have sometimes earnestly desired that the various conflicts which, from within and from without, have attended me in the present engagement, may be a means of bringing me more to this experience, and to know more of the power and love of Christ, and of that mercy which delivers in the time of need. The present state of the country, and the devastations occasioned by the fever, have certainly added much to the trial of our faith. Such a visitation is awful and solemn, and ought to be felt so; it ought to bring us into deep feelings for others, and I am sure it ought to raise the query in our hearts whether we also are ready. Though the first impression of fear is a good deal passed off, and I hope the fever has subsided in many places, yet I have felt the seriousness of our situation, and I think I have sometimes been solemnly impressed with the infinite importance of a preparation for such a change, of knowing Christ to be, through faith and obedience, our Resurrection and our Life. It is difficult to express how I have longed, for myself and for others, an establishment in this faith. How-

ever poor and however limited our services may be in this land, yet we have never had to doubt that it has been our right calling; we have never, I think I may say, experienced any painful misgivings as to the guiding Hand that hath led us here. This is an inexpressible favour, and reconciles to every dispensation; for we know that the consequences and the fruits, either to ourselves or others, are no more at our command than the cause which led us forth. We must endeavour to do that which our hand findeth to do, and we may leave the rest. Little as has been our communication with the people in general, yet the spiritual bondage, and what appears to us darkness, which I fear prevails too much, is deeply to be felt. It has a very distressing effect on the mind, and cannot fail of raising something of a mourning spirit in the heart. It is humbling to be able to administer so little to the help of others in their distresses and needs. We have had much rough, winterly, and stormy weather, which has for the last day or two given way to something of the sweet feeling of Spring. I have been ready to hope also that we have been permitted to taste a little of this sweetness spiritually, having had a comfortable Quarterly Meeting at this place, and often having to feel, lately, something of that peace which the world cannot give, and to partake of a little refreshment on our way.

Proceeding in the service they visited Mountrath, Roscrea, &c., and on the 3rd of Fourth Month arrived at Limerick.

4th.—A day of rest.

5th, First-day.—A laborious day spiritually; many present at meeting. After very earnestly desiring that we might be brought to an entire dependence on our Guide and Helper, these words presented themselves very impressively:—"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light; but wisdom shall be justified by her children." I had a little to unfold how it is, for a season, that the children

of this world are wiser than the children of light—they live at ease, they may enjoy the pleasures of sin, they avoid the cross, they come not to the light. We cannot understand the end of the ungodly until we come, like David, to the sanctuary of the Lord; *then* we know that their end is destruction, without hope. But how different the "children of light!" They endure the cross for their dear Lord and Master. They know Him to be *their Saviour*, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We cannot judge one another; "but there is One that judgeth." Oh, the importance of coming to the light, that we may know of what spirit we are! It has been my allotment in life to experience much and almost constant self-mortification—I doubt not a *needful* refinement, and for my deeper humiliation.

On the 6th they went on to Cork—7th to Youghal—meeting there and returned on the 8th to Cork; attending the Monthly Meeting on the following day, of which P. G. remarks:—

It was not a little weighty to our feelings, as these large meetings generally are. On the text, "The harvest truly is plenteous," &c., had to encourage the few faithful labourers. I visited H. D., a young girl in the last stage of consumption. I had to remind those present with her, and to feel myself, the importance of becoming as little children, without which we cannot enter the kingdom.

First-day, 12*th*.—The prospect of this day was uncommonly weighty to us both. But we have again, with humble thankfulness, to acknowledge the help afforded in the needful time. This I experienced at meeting, when, through great mercy, I felt more than usually strengthened to deliver what was given me to communicate on the offices of the Redeemer:—"When He ascended up on high He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The deliverance offered by the Saviour from

the captivity of Satan, from the bondage of corruption, and from the spirit of this world, by his death, resurrection, and ascension.

Examination.—What do we each know of this deliverance?

We cannot serve two masters:—is Christ our Master?

Are we still under the bondage of Satan, &c.?

Not only is this *deliverance* experienced through the Redeemer, but he *giveth gifts* unto men, especially the gifts of the Spirit. How are we improving these talents unto the glory of our Lord and Master? Those who serve Christ shall be with Him where he is. We were favoured with a solemn close to this meeting, and the spirit of supplication seemed poured forth. It was trying to me to have to speak again in the afternoon meeting; but I could not be clear without addressing a few words of encouragement to those who were travelling through the wilderness: "These forty years has the Lord thy God led thee through the wilderness, to humble and to prove thee." I visited on her deathbed once more H. D., and had to supplicate for her that her transgressions might be forgiven, and her spirit so purified, that it might return to God who gave it. I was concerned to observe at Cork the number of children idle and unoccupied about the streets.

13*th.*—Comfortable departure from Cork. J. A. accompanied us to Glanmire, an interesting-looking village. Rode to J. C.'s, a serious character, to whom I brought a letter. It was comforting to meet with religious people. I believe they are amongst those who are willing to labour for the good of the poor around them. There are many obstructions and discouragements to every good work in this country; but we know there is a power that can remove them all. I long to have the young people among Friends more engaged in general good in this country.

We have been pleased and struck with the affectionate manner which is very agreeably conspicuous in the Irish towards each other. The poor have this characteristic. We have also

remarked much of the appearance of happiness and harmony in the domestic life among "Friends."

The travellers visited some interesting families on their route to Clonmel, attending also the meeting at Garryroan, from which place they proceeded to Anner Mills, where, says P. G., "we were kindly received by S. G. and her daughters."

16*th*.—Meeting at Clonmel. The effect of our finding ourselves among so many deeply experienced Friends, though very comforting, was, at first, depressing to my spirits. I had to speak on the invitation still going forth to the Church,—"The Spirit and the bride say come," &c. Dined at Suir Island School, a very interesting establishment. I like very much the general plan of the schools in Ireland. The whole community are more as of one family than in England.* Much watchful care is extended towards the dear children in this institution. Anna spoke encouragingly to them after dinner, and I had to pour out a little of my oppressed spirit for ourselves, and more especially for this large family, under a fresh and comforting belief that none shall seek the face of the Lord in vain.

17*th*.—Dined with J. and S. G. They are truly valuable Friends; but I felt a little restrained with them. How necessary it is, in all companies, and under every influence, *still* to have our eye *single* to our dear Lord and Master.

18*th*.—The select Quarterly Meeting. The evening spent with S. C., the teacher at Suir Island: very satisfactory communications on the religious instruction of children.

First-day, 19*th*.—The morning meeting was trying. I felt rather distressed after it. But the afternoon, in a measure, dispelled these clouds.

Second-day.—Quarterly Meeting for discipline—lively and satisfactory. When the queries were gone through, I had to speak on these words,—"The weapons of our warfare are not

* This may not apply in the present day.—Ed.

carnal, but spiritual," and on the christian fight, and on the armour of God.

Third-day.—An interesting meeting for worship and conclusion to the Quarterly Meeting. How important it is, under *all* circumstances, to look with a single eye unto the Lord, for *this only* gives a feeling of peace. I had to enlarge on these words, —"Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," and on the importance of doing the day's work in the day-time, working out our own salvation, and seeking for reconciliation with God through the Redeemer, and thus becoming as lively stones in the spiritual house of the Lord. In much natural fear, but in a little faith, I had to supplicate that the Lord might be pleased still to build up his Church. After meeting called on the M's—a sweet family of young women who had lost their mother in early life. In the afternoon to the mill, to a little school, and one of the cottages.

22*nd.*—A solemn parting with the family at Anner Mills.

23*rd.*—Meeting at Carlow. Had to enlarge on the words, —"Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls." This Word is the power of an endless life—the power of God unto salvation. I felt this subject, the living principle of Friends, open before me with much clearness, and had to express my earnest desire that nothing of ourselves, our own wisdom and wills, might obstruct the dominion of this ingrafted Word, which not only changes the heart, but leads to that knowledge of God and of Christ which is life eternal. Had some communication with the master of the school on the religious instruction of his boys, to my relief. A meeting at Ballitore; then to Dublin on the 24th. In reviewing the time passed since we last left Dublin, and in remembering our various exercises, I have felt how we are called upon to return thanks unto the Lord, who, in all our difficulties and conflicts, through all our fears and great weakness, hath hitherto helped us; and may it lead us still to trust in Him, in whom is "everlasting strength."

First-day, 26*th*.—The Yearly Meeting. S. G. spoke on the necessity of coming before the Lord in a humble state of mind, to which I added a few words from this text,—"Thou sayest that thou art rich and increased with goods, &c., and knowest not that thou art wretched and poor," &c.

28*th*.—I felt bound to lay my concern before the meeting on the religious education of children. Though my views on this important subject do not, I believe, and have to feel, fully unite with those of some deeply experienced Friends, yet it is still a burden which I have to bear, and I desire only to look with a single eye to what may, through the Spirit, be required of me, and I hope to bear, with a submissive mind, the pains and humiliations which I sometimes have to experience.

29*th*.—Rose early, and was engaged with dear S. G. in writing an epistle to the meetings of Friends in Ireland.

Fifth Month 1*st*.—Closing meeting. Visit to the men's meeting, under much weight and cross to my own will. I had to express my fear lest there should be such a spirit, still prevailing in too many, which would "crucify the Son of God afresh." With encouragement to those who, through all conflicts and trials, have sought to uphold the holy cause of the Redeemer. They may rejoice; although they now suffer for Christ, yet "when his glory shall be revealed," they "shall be glad also with exceeding joy." If sons are still given us for prophets, and young men for Nazarites, the importance of watchfulness against that spirit which would say unto the prophets, prophesy not, and would give the young men wine to drink. Farewell in the women's meeting. He that is faithful in that which is least, shall be made ruler over much.

First-day, 3*rd*.—This was a solemn day to me: I felt the seriousness of the prospect of departure from our friends. On reviewing the exercises of our journey in the afternoon meeting, I had to address a few words to several states in the body. To the faithful: "Comfort ye, comfort ye *my people*, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, cry unto

her that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is *pardoned.*" The security and consolation of the faithful: they know that "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus!" "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

To the wavering, doubting spirit: "Oh, thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt?"

Applied to the faint-hearted: "If thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the salvation of God."

To the rebellious: "They dwell in a dry land, they build upon the sand," when the floods, &c. beat against their house it must fall.

The Spirit is still saying "come," to the faithful by encouragement, to the faithless by warning, to the rebellious by reproof and instruction.

I had to add our petitions, though very weak and very unworthy, not only for the people, but for the children wherever they may be scattered in this land, that they may know Christ to be their Redeemer and Shepherd.

For those who still sit in darkness, as in the shadow of death, for the sick especially, and that many may be added to the kingdom of God and the Lamb.

4th.—Left Dublin for Kilconnor. A sweet Spring morning. I walked before breakfast, enjoying the lovely views of the country. At the meeting, I had to speak on that text of James which enjoins that the rich should rejoice when they are brought low in spirit. Happy for those who, if they be rich in this world, are humbled under the mighty hand of God, so that Christ may reign over them. Anna expressed her fear lest there should be in some a desire to be inheritors of two kingdoms: this not compatible with the gospel dispensation. I had to supplicate that if the "friendship of the world" be "enmity with God," our affections might be more truly set on things above.

6th.—Meeting at Ballitore: sweetly situated among the

trees. Had to encourage the faithful few. In the afternoon to Cooladine, to Thomas Thompson's, an Elder, living in much true simplicity in a nice farm-house, with a sweet family.* We enjoyed a quiet evening with them.

7th.—Meeting at Cooladine,—a sweet feeling prevailed. The language of encouragement flowed towards the faithful remnant who still seem to keep their places here. Came forward to Enniscorthy,—meeting there in the evening,—a considerable number present, Friends and their neighbours, to whom I felt drawn to address the language of our Redeemer,—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest!" with encouragement to come and partake of the consolations of Christ.

8th.—Rose early and proceeded to Forest meeting, which was laborious and our exercise weighty. This was the language that impressed me (to utter amongst them), "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." "They that have done well unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation." The importance and necessity of considering our latter end, and of a preparation for it, through a living and experimental knowledge of the Saviour. Afternoon, came on to S. E.'s at Ross; at meeting there had to unfold the different states of the religious and the ungodly.

9th.—To Waterford, drank tea with J. S. and his wife,—had a few words to say on bringing up the little children in the simplicity of the truth.

First-day, 10*th.*—Rose early and prepared for visiting the school. Morning meeting large. There was some feeling of real encouragement; but I had to speak *closely* on the state of

* Two of the children of this valued Friend—a son and a daughter—from motives of disinterested philanthropy, accompanied Hannah Kilham in a visit to Africa. The young man, John Thompson, of pious character, sank under the influence of fever, whilst labouring for the benefit of the native population. —Ed.

some there, from the text, "We are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." This was our standard and profession from the beginning; but we have cause for humiliation and contrition in such an evident departure from it. With J. W. to the Provincial School at Newtown,—an interesting visit. Afternoon meeting solemn and relieving. At this, the last opportunity in Ireland, I was enabled to commend our dear Friends, whether present or absent, and of every class, to the grace of our Lord Jesus. Then it seemed to us that our services in the land were finished and we were set free.

11*th*.—Left Waterford. Lodged at Blenheim. Many Friends accompanied us to the packet. We parted from them in much love. Voyage to Milford of twenty hours. We felt constrained to remain with our dear Friends there during the next day.

15*th*.—To Brecon.

16*th*.—To Gloucester. After the meeting there, I parted from my dear companion, which I felt much, after all we had passed through together. Proceeded with my friend Samuel Elly to London, and attended the Yearly Meeting there.

On reaching home she addressed the following letter to a Friend:—

Earlham, Sixth Month 10th, 1818.

Though I have had much comfort and enjoyment in meeting all my dear friends again, yet the pressure of engagements and interests during my stay in and about London was sometimes rather overcoming to me, and at last I felt so much exhausted that the rest of home was peculiarly desirable to me. It was an interesting and, I think, encouraging Yearly Meeting: there appeared to me real cause for comfort in the state of the Society. I had not much part to take in any way, which was a relief to me; I went to none of the Committees, and was thoroughly disposed to retire into the back-ground. It is a good thing, and I never felt it more than at this Yearly Meeting, that

there is that spirit in the Society which leads to watching over one another for good: if it be kept under the right influence it is an invaluable safeguard. Individually, I passed along very much unnoticed; I felt neither encouragement nor discouragement from others. I sometimes fear falling into a flat, indifferent state, about myself; I feel there is a danger of it, from my circumstances, and from the tendency of my own mind. I have had hardly time to dwell much on our late interesting journey; but, on returning home, I feel afresh sensible of the great cause we have for thankfulness in having been carried through our various exercises and conflicts. I have felt very much without a burden on reflecting on our little exercises in Ireland, and the feeling of peace, I really believe, does rest upon it. This is an unspeakable, and I do sometimes feel, an unmerited favour. It is a privilege to have been so sweetly and so nearly united as I trust we were in this service. There are few things I more earnestly desire to attain than that spirit of love which would lead to still more unreserved rejoicing with those that rejoice, as well as mourning with those that mourn.

CHAPTER III.

1818–1819.

RELIGIOUS AND PHILANTHROPIC ENGAGEMENTS IN NORFOLK — COMPILES VOLUME OF HYMNS—CORRESPONDENCE—HEALTH FAILS—MUCH EXERTION IN SCHOOLS, PRISONS, ETC.—ATTENDS THE YEARLY MEETING IN LONDON —A CONTINUANCE OF DECLINING HEALTH — VISITS UPTON — SERIOUS ATTACK OF ILLNESS THERE—REMOVES TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT— WINTER THERE—CORRESPONDENCE.

Soon after her return home, Priscilla Gurney visited the families of Friends of Norwich and Yarmouth. After the conclusion of this engagement, she reviews the lengthened period of religious service in which she had been employed, and adds:—

It has been truly a time of probation to me,—one of much deep inward exercise and conflict. Though much brightness has not been my allotment, yet I have often felt, and have cause gratefully to acknowledge, the "Everlasting Arm" to be underneath, and that the grace of the Lord Jesus is still sufficient for every service to which He is Himself pleased to call us.

The ensuing winter was spent at Earlham, but it was closely occupied in the fulfilment of many social and religious duties. Priscilla Gurney devoted some portions of her retirement to the compilation of an excellent little volume of hymns,—consisting of selections from many pious authors, and of some instructive pieces never before

published. She designed it particularly for the benefit of young persons of the Society of Friends,—but it is calculated to edify true Christians of every class.

Before the close of the year 1818, the health of this devoted servant of Christ showed symptoms of declining vigour, yet not sufficiently marked to excite in the minds of her family any serious apprehensions. During the Autumn she laboured diligently. In conjunction with her beloved brother Joseph John Gurney, she held some appointed meetings with different classes of the Friends of Norwich. Alluding to this engagement, she says:—

I had felt the service in prospect very weighty. We were carried through to our own relief, though I have had to feel lately as if my little measure of religious labour were almost run out. To the parents, I had to express my sense of the great importance of being faithful to our stewardship,—that of parents being one of weight and responsibility,—they are called upon to watch over the souls of their children for good, to train them for an heavenly inheritance. There is much danger of a worldly spirit creeping in amongst us,—of the cross of our dear Redeemer being rejected. The meeting with the young people was very satisfactory. I had to address them on the words of the apostle, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in Truth," and on the comforts and privileges of those, especially in early life, who are indeed walking in the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus; with warning lest any should be led from the Truth by the spirit of the world, and by the temptations of the adversary of our souls' salvation.

On the 3rd of Eighth Month, J. H. and his daughter paid us an acceptable and strengthening visit. On First-day, in the forenoon meeting, he unfolded, in a few words, his own experience in being brought, through mental suffering and conflict, to obedience and consequently to peace; quoting,—"Be thou

faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'' After I had added some expressions on our supplications being offered in faith, J. H. spoke of the badge of discipleship, *love*, which he believed was permitted to be our covering.

4th.—J. H. left us after expressing his feelings very sweetly to us collectively, speaking of the precious communications which we had been permitted to enjoy together. He said that after partaking of angels' food we must be content to hunger and to abstain.

I attended the Workhouse Committee. We came to the conclusion to have a First-day School opened there. I have particularly desired that the blessing of the Lord might rest on our undertaking.

5th.—A sweet meeting. Encouragement to the few who are willing to forsake their worldly interests and to gather together in the name of the Lord. He will still be with all such.

7th.—We heard the affecting account of the death of dearest Louisa's little girl,—this is a close trial and a heartfelt sorrow, and I feel very near and tender sympathy with our beloved sister; but I trust and earnestly desire that it may be for her good, and for the good of all of us, to be thus exercised.

8th.—At Norwich with my school children. Then to Ipswich, to meet Stephen Grellet and William Allen, before their departure for the continent.

Here she penned the following letter to her sister Louisa Hoare, dated, Ipswich, Eighth Month 10th :—

I need hardly say how deeply and tenderly I feel for thee. I long to be with thee. I have the most lively participation with thee in every trial,—indeed we may truly say, "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." Thou hast been continually on my mind. I have a strong hope that thou wilt be comforted and supported in this close trial, and be

strengthened to bear it with resignation and composure. I have passed through many conflicts within the last year or two, and have so deeply felt life to be disappointing in itself that my mind is prepared to expect suffering to be often our allotment here; and I also feel how much we *need* suffering to keep us in a humble, submissive frame of mind: therefore, I desire to be more and more willing to accept it with resignation for myself, and for those most near and dear to me; though in some respects it seems harder to feel this resignation for others than for ourselves. My heart is indeed with you; I have a most comfortable hope that you will all be helped through from day to day. How desirable it is for us, at all times, and more especially in times of trial, to endeavour not to look beyond the present day; and I hope, my dearest Louisa, this will be *thy* experience, and I do indeed believe that "as thy day is, so shall thy strength be."

First-day, 9th.—This was one of those deeply interesting and instructive occasions not soon to be forgotten. The meetings might truly be said to be edifying. Stephen Grellet spoke in a striking manner on the text, "The Lord is with you while ye be with him," beautifully exemplified by the history of Asa. Also on the necessity and blessedness of holding fast the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; illustrated by the circumstances of John the Baptist: concluding by a most beautiful, impressive and affecting address, in which he expressed his love to the gospel; to his fellow-creatures everywhere; encouraging also the tried servants of the Lord to hold fast unto the end. In the evening we were again gathered into a solemn silence before the Lord, and permitted to enjoy something of a holy communion in Christ, and we parted under the sweet cementing influence of the love of God.

11*th.*—Returned home from Ipswich.

12*th.*—We had all the boys of the Lancasterian School to dinner.

Eighth Month 13*th.*—Widow F.'s funeral. I was made sensible of the solemnity and awfulness of death, at whatever period it may arrive.

16*th.*—To the Workhouse School in the morning. How do I increasingly see the necessity of seeking for the Divine blessing on all our objects of interest. I sometimes feel a deep concern for myself and others, that we may have life in Christ. I long for us to be aroused from sleep, and this was so much impressed on my mind this morning, that I had to express a few words on our Lord's warning exhortation,—"Lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." The awfulness of being found in this spiritual sleep, in this careless, *unrepenting* state, should the Judge of all the earth call for us to appear before his judgment-seat! Oh, that our prayers may be offered more and more *in faith!* Then may we still hope, though discouragements abound, "to see the salvation of our God." It is a deep and solemn service to be engaged, though in ever so small a measure, in promoting the Lord's salvation in the souls of others. Our Lord only knows the conflicts, the spiritual travail, and the desire of his poor unworthy servants thus engaged, and how deeply they are brought to feel that the work, the spirit, and the life are his, and that they have nothing of themselves wherewith they may promote his holy cause.

Adult School in the evening, &c. My life is full; but the grace of the Lord can alone make it fruitful to myself and others.

17*th.*—I feel daily and hourly the need of drawing nearer unto the Lord—of seeking to live in near communion with my Saviour. This will and does supply every void—this makes the wilderness to blossom like the rose. The manifestations of the love of Christ as our Redeemer, have at times of late been bright and comforting to me under every tribulation.

First-day, 23*rd.*—I had to say a few words on our Lord's

declaration,—"He that is not with us is against us," &c. In the afternoon,—"Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Spoke on the unity of the Spirit, the source from which this unity springs, simple devotedness to the Lord, that which destroys the principle of self in the heart,—on following the Lord Jesus rather than the "prince of the power of the air."

24th.—My uncle B. died rather suddenly: his end appeared peaceful. How often do we find the words of the psalmist verified,—"Behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

Ninth Month 2nd.—My uncle B.'s funeral. I felt the occasion; it was a very exercising and heart-searching time: I was brought most sensibly to feel the importance of "*loving the praise of God*" more than the praise of men; I was constrained to break the silence of the meeting by a few words of the apostle,—"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a *new creature*." It is this which can prepare us for the awful change from mortality to immortality;—if we are indeed in Christ Jesus, and know him to be our Saviour, we must be born again.

LETTER TO "M. Y."

Tenth Month, 1818.

I often feel it of great importance that these events, which bring the reality of death to our view, should not pass away unimproved,—that they should be *teaching* us the lesson of having our affections set on things above. These events make a strong impression on our *natural* feelings; but there is a danger, without watchfulness and prayer, of their passing away without that influence on our hearts and *lives* which, we may fully believe, is intended by the trials and afflictions of life. In such scenes, (witnessing death), the *truth* as well as the power of religion and of the gospel dispensations are often mercifully

manifested. It is thus that the season of affliction becomes blessed and sanctified to us!

TO HER COUSIN MARIA FOX.

Earlham, Eleventh Month 11th, 1818.

I wish much to know whether you have adopted my plan of religious instruction with the children in your meeting. There are many Friends and deeply feeling minds who are much on the cautious side of the question; and this, I have no doubt, is well; but with caution and watchfulness, seeking to move and to act under the right influence, I am (and I believe many others also,) convinced of the great importance of religious care and instruction in early life, and that, in spiritual things as well as natural, we are called upon to be endeavouring to sow the seed, though we know, and must always deeply feel, that we can never add the blessing and give the increase. I feel, I hope, truly thankful in being permitted really to settle at home, having no other defined prospect before me. We do indeed experience that we serve no hard Master, and that He does not call upon us to do more than He enables us to perform. I have felt this very sensibly in being so much released from religious service, and in being allowed the enjoyment and rest of settling once more at home. In the last two years I have had so much travelling, so many exercises of mind and body, that now to be set free, which I think will probably be the case for a long time, (according to my present feelings,) is indeed an unspeakable favour, and calls for humble thankfulness. I do not know when, if *ever*, I have felt so much comfort, enjoyment, and peace in my own home. I long to have my heart made more and more sensible of the many mercies bestowed, not only upon me, but also upon those who are most dear and near to me. How is dear ——? The more she is made *willing* to give up *all* to follow Christ, the more I am persuaded she will experience a *peace* which the world cannot give. If life be a wilderness, the saving and experimental knowledge of Christ

makes it at times to blossom as the rose: and whether we abound or suffer need, as to the things of time, there is a joy and peace in believing, for those who cannot be satisfied with merely temporal things: and I often increasingly desire that we may seek more earnestly for the attainment of that knowledge of the true God and of Jesus Christ, which is "*life eternal.*" How very important it is, that Friends should in the present day keep their places rightly, keeping near to the *life*, and *abiding in Christ;* this, and this alone, will enable them still to be as lights in the world.

Ninth Month 13*th.*—Much inward depression was the covering of my spirit during this day. How deeply do I feel my own unworthiness when partaking of so many blessings! I long for deliverance from this bondage of spirit; but whilst it continues so much and so often to be my portion, may it be an humbling lesson to me. At the morning meeting I had to express the language of the poor woman,—"If I may but touch the hem of his garment I shall be made whole." We do, indeed, feel that, unless we approach the Saviour, and partake of his virtue and power, we cannot be healed.

Third-day, 22*nd.*—Quarterly Meeting—comfortable and peaceful. I had to offer the language of exhortation from the text in Revelations, "Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain," &c. In the meeting for discipline I made the proposition to open a school in this county for the children of Friends, which was well received.

24*th.*—Visit to the hospital, which was interesting, and on the whole satisfactory.

First-day, 27*th.*—A comfortable day to me. I have had of late more serenity of mind, more rest and peace, which is an unspeakable favour. The meetings were solemn. I felt an earnest desire that we might be brought to understand, *savingly* the mystery of God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

First-day, Tenth Month 4*th.*—Had to say a few words on the prophetical declaration,—"This child is set for the fall and

rising again of many in Israel," descriptive of the gospel dispensation. The creature must be brought down before the Creator can be exalted; must be thoroughly humbled and contrited before the power of the Redeemer can be fully manifested. This is a stumbling-block to such as are setting up themselves, or anything *in* or *of* themselves.

A public meeting was at this time held in Norwich, to promote christianity among the Jews. Several persons from different places were assembled at Earlham on the occasion, with some of the brothers and sisters, and amongst the number of other visitors was Charles Simeon of Cambridge. He was intimately acquainted with the several members of the Gurney family, and particularly united to Priscilla in the bonds of christian friendship. She mentions also the holding of the meeting for the Bible Society during the same week, and adds:—

There has, I think, been much of the liberty of the Spirit in our meeting together at Earlham at this time, and much sweet unity in the bond of peace. Not only has this bond been strengthened amongst the brothers and sisters, but also with our visitors, which is a great blessing.

First-day, 25th.—I felt deeply the solemnity of spiritual worship, and expressed my earnest solicitude that we might come before the Lord with reverence and godly fear. I afterwards visited the poor women in the workhouse, and was secretly engaged in prayer that the Lord would be graciously pleased to break the spiritual bonds of these poor people, and bring them to the blessed knowledge of their Saviour. Oh! how deeply do I sometimes feel my weakness, my poverty, in administering to others; but I still experience that, if we cast our whole selves on the Lord, his grace is sufficient for us. It is an unmerited favour, if a blessing be permitted to attend our poor unworthy services.

29th.—To Pakefield with Louisa. We went to meeting there together. I deeply felt my own weakness, and expressed it in referring to the words of the Psalmist,—"When my heart and my flesh faileth, the Lord is the strength of my life, and my portion for ever."

First-day, Eleventh Month 1st.—Went to Yarmouth Meeting. A day of much spiritual exercise. Enlarged a little on *prayer*: "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet," &c. The blessing and the duty of secret prayer, and of communion with God through Christ; of seeking *to live in this spiritual communion.*

7th.—Commenced the school at Earlham with fresh spirits.

17th.—Visited the workhouse, where I saw a poor man on his death-bed. It was an awful scene, as he did not appear sensible of any religious consolation. I felt solemnly the mysteriousness of an eternal state.

To her cousin Hannah C. Backhouse she wrote:—

Earlham, 13th of Eleventh Month, 1818.

I really disapprove of living without holding any communication with those I love; for I think the habit of having no intercourse may, without great watchfulness, beget something of the feeling of indifference in one another's concerns. While many new interests are found as we advance in life, I am much inclined to cherish those that have taken deep root, and are of long standing. I enjoy our quiet settlement and happy home: my time is fully and very pleasantly occupied. I am enough exercised in mind and body to be often made very sensible that this is not our rest, and a glimpse of that eternal rest which "remains for the people of God," occasionally comes before me with brightness and hope. But this is not without fear and trembling, "Lest we should come short of it." I think I have of late been rather increasingly impressed with the duty of watchfulness and prayer, not only for ourselves, but for others; and this has, perhaps, arisen from feeling how much I need to be remembered by others. I have been much interested by hearing of the school at Darlington. I rejoice that you have

taken up the cause of education, which appears to me increasingly one of *great importance* to the welfare of society. In the present state of things, a liberal education, as far as it is consistent with the principles of Friends, is really a duty owing to the rising generation. I hope, dear H., thou wilt not quite lay aside thy drawing. I think it such a *useful* kind of recreation for the young people of a certain class in the Society, and may often take the place of much more unprofitable employments. I should be glad to hear of thy teaching thy children to draw. I often feel a little ashamed (with rather a strong sense of my own deficiencies) of being so engaged in recommending things to others, and encouraging them in their duties.

19*th*.—I went off early to the Monthly Meeting at Tivetshall, where I was again helped through those little services that seemed to be required of me. The first meeting encouraging. It was a close exercise of submission to have to visit the men's meeting—a service to which I have so seldom been called, and which is remarkably adverse to my nature. I left with them the word of warning lest there should be any who, from discouragement or other obstructions, might be ready to say, "I pray thee have me excused." How many exercises and conflicts of spirit have I had to experience in some of these solitary meeting excursions; yet how mercifully has help been administered in the needful time!

Eleventh Month 27*th*, 1818.—My birth-day—thirty-three. I feel seriously my advance in life—my youth is entirely gone. I long to be enabled to resign myself more submissively, more perfectly, to the service of my blessed Redeemer, in whom is salvation and remission of sin, and to be pressing after an entire preparation for an entrance into his holy kingdom.

PRISCILLA GURNEY TO ——.

Earlham, Twelfth Month 2nd, 1818.

I often view your situation with real interest in spiritual things. It is certainly being cast on rather barren land, but this

is not discouraging to me where the desire is sincere, to be growing in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. I feel an increasing persuasion that where the heart is really given up to serve the Lord, "His grace is sufficient for us," in every situation and under every circumstance of life. I have also something like a little faith that you are in your right place, and that if thou and thy dear husband are enabled to fill your different stations faithfully, diligently, and with an humble spirit, as unto the Lord, and not unto man, He will bless you as much as be good for you in things temporal, and what is of infinitely more consequence in things spiritual. As I advance in life (being just thirty-three,) and as I have had very deeply to feel that the things of life are in themselves unsatisfactory, so I think I have been more and more made sensible of the infinite importance of those things that are eternal, and of having our hearts fixed upon them, which, so far from lessening, would, I cannot but believe, increase our diligence and watchfulness, in all the duties in life, and does in fact give the greatest relish to all its lawful enjoyments.

11th.—I wrote to the Islington School Committee on the subject of religious instruction—one of much and serious importance to the welfare of our Society, and which, at this time, claims the consideration of many Friends. I think I feel less fear of the judgments of men than I once did; I desire to have my eye constantly single unto the Lord.

First-day, Twelfth Month 13th.—I rose with some sense of the renewed strength that cometh only from the Lord, and with an earnest desire to commend myself and others unto Him. I feel very thankful for the hours of retirement and profound quiet which my present life affords. I trust they have been favourable to communion of spirit with the Lord, and in Him with his children.

First-day, 27th.—I received the interesting, affecting, and yet, in one sense, comforting intelligence, that William Forster

has a prospect of visiting America. It is animating and striking to see faith triumph over nature. I have lately experienced much want of strength and vigour; but this seldom gives me any uneasiness.

30th.—Wrote to W. and A. Forster:—

Earlham, Twelfth Month 30th, 1818.

MY BELOVED FRIENDS,

It seems difficult for me to express by words, how deeply interesting, affecting, and yet comforting, your letter has been to me. The *intelligence* conveyed in it at last came upon me unexpectedly; it was brought before me with that kind of evidence, in which we are constrained to acknowledge, "It is the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes." We all felt it exceedingly, and I have been able, I believe, to mourn and rejoice with you. All that you have passed through and may yet have to suffer, calls for our most tender and near love and sympathy; and yet it is unprofitable not to rejoice that the power and love of the Redeemer should have thus prevailed in your hearts, and I cannot but feel every hope, that *in the end*, it will also be, to you both, a joy unspeakable and full of glory. The depths and extent of the sacrifice cannot be fully understood but by yourselves; yet those who know you the best, can the best know *what* it must be. I long to be more capable of entering with you into the cup of suffering, as well as of consolation, which, I am sure, abundantly attends those so devoted to the Lord. I have felt comforted in my present *entire disengagement;* for this amongst other things—that I may, in any way as it may seem needful, be devoted to your service as far as outward help can go (which, to be sure, is very limited); I trust you will have it from all your friends: but may we all be enabled to seek for you that help and power which can alone effectually sustain you and quiet every storm. I feel unequal to saying much on the subject, but I believe I shall be much with you in mind. I dislike sending you so poor a letter, so little *expression* of what I have in my heart

towards you; but I have been so remarkably languid in mind and body the last week or two, from not having been very well, that I seem incapable of much expression about anything; but this is, I believe, but a passing cloud; for I have, of late, been very comfortable, and I hope have been thankful in the enjoyment of a quiet, peaceful state of mind, with now and then something like a *gleam of rejoicing* in the openings of that *rest* which remaineth, &c., if we can but attain unto it.

Engaged most of the day by our school concerns, which, perhaps through much weakness of body, I felt burdensome and oppressive. O Lord, undertake for me! has been truly the language of my spirit of late.

31*st.*—This year, fraught with many interests, and blest with many unmerited mercies, has closed, somehow or other, cloudily, under a very deep and painful sense of distressing weakness and unworthiness, and with a renewed feeling of being, alas! but "an unprofitable servant." Still thy mercy and thy goodness, O Lord, follow us all the days of our lives; and may it be more and more our earnest desire to dwell in thy house for ever.

From these later entries in her journal we perceive the indications of an enfeebled constitution of body—producing a depressing effect upon the naturally bright, cheerful, and active spirit of this excellent young person. The seeds of disease were deeply sown in her delicate frame, and slowly, but surely, they produced the fatal result. On commencing the year 1819, Priscilla Gurney makes the following entry:—

First Month 1*st.*—I arose with something of a thankful and relieving sense of that Divine life and light which dispels our clouds of darkness, and with the earnest desire for myself and others that, on entering on another year, our loins may be girded and our lamps burning. Whatever be the events of

this year, may we be among those servants who wait for their Lord, and who, when He cometh, shall be found ready. I have enjoyed the privilege of spending this day quietly over my own fireside, and much in solitude. I have valued this retirement for reviewing the past, and for seeking after a right preparation of mind for the future.

4th.—Interesting time with dear H. The prospect of parting with them (her brother and sister Buxton) has made me very low all day. After our morning's reading, I was enabled, though under a heavy feeling of weakness and depression, to supplicate for the continuance of that Divine blessing upon them which has been so eminently extended towards them; for our dear brother in an especial manner. This month he is to commence his parliamentary career. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with him, to preserve him from all evil, and to enable him to become valiant for the cause of Truth and Righteousness upon the earth.

5th.—The Buxtons left Earlham. I spent part of the morning amongst the poor; felt dreary in returning home, but afterwards a peaceful influence prevailed.

6th.—To Norwich Benevolent Society; after which I visited two men in the Castle.

8th.—To Easton about the poor; not to much satisfaction. Evening, to the Quarterly Conference of the Bible Association.

First-day.—The meeting to-day was very comforting, owned, I cannot but believe, by the presence of Him who is the Head and Life of the church.

11th.—Spent the morning among the poor at Easton, and finished my concerns there upon the whole satisfactorily.

13th.—Visited Barlow on his death-bed. I had to supplicate for the mercy of the Lord towards him, that, whether he lived or died, he might be the Lord's. He seemed comforted, and expressed something of a joyful foretaste of that which is to come. How great and how wonderful are the mercies of the Lord towards those who may appear to the eye of man amongst

the weakest of his creatures. I was thankful in having been made willing to yield, (though in the cross to my nature,) to this little service, and I can bear my testimony to the truth of the declaration, that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

14*th*, *Fifth-day*.—A solemn meeting. I expressed a little, (after many meetings in silence,) on the words of our Lord, "Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find watching"—applicable, not only to the *last day and hour*, but to *every* event in our lives, and to the spiritual appearing of the Lord Jesus. Many interesting letters from our family circle, which excited much feeling—from Rachel, giving an account of her journey to Darlington. Encouragement on the subject of religious instruction amongst Friends in the north, also on prison affairs. From Hannah, telling us of dear Fowell's entering Parliament, and of her numerous family interests and cares. And from dearest Louisa, who still suffers much from her late trial [the loss of a sweet child]. May we all, individually and collectively, dwell under the shadow of the Almighty, and find entrance into the fold of the true Shepherd, where alone we can be kept in safety.

18*th*.—Part of the morning in Norwich, visiting two women in the Castle. I so greatly want more faithfulness, courage and energy, in all my objects.

On the following day she addressed a letter to her beloved cousin Maria Fox, from which the annexed extract is taken.

Earlham, First Month 20th, 1819.

I am only more and more convinced of the importance of endeavouring to sow the seed, and of *allowing* our young people some knowledge of scripture truths, provided we keep as much as possible to the life of our own principles, and seek for the guidance and help of heavenly influence for them and for ourselves. I deeply feel the importance of a jealous watchful-

ness of any innovation of our principle of the liberty and immediate teachings of the Spirit. This liberty of the Spirit I increasingly see to be an inestimable privilege, and we may well *watch* against the bondage of *man's* instructions. All that I desire to maintain and encourage is the *simple* knowledge of the Scriptures; and let those engaged in the work adopt such methods as appear to them the most simple, and the most easy to their own minds.

21*st*.—A very sweet meeting. Joseph spoke on the Comforter. The Holy Spirit is indeed *a Comforter*. He dwelt on the inestimable and unspeakable privileges which can only be enjoyed by those who receive this holy visitant into their hearts. And oh! it was the fervent prayer of my soul that this may be the case with *us*. And, for myself, that having no very strong attractions to *this* life, I may really be laying hold on *eternal* life. It is unspeakably important to realize to one's mind death and judgment, so as to seek a preparation for them. My having some *increased* sense of the reality of heavenly things, and of enduring rest, is a great cause of humble thankfulness. I have lived much of late in my own room; yet I highly prize being with my dear brother and sister, whose kindness and affection for me are a constant source of comfort. I humbly trust that, in my hours of profound retirement, I have tasted of the power and love of my ever-blessed Redeemer, in whose presence there is fulness of joy.

Priscilla Gurney's solicitude on account of the youth continued unabated, and the wisdom that guided her in the manifestation of it is conspicuously evinced in the following letter which she addressed to a young person who was about to engage in the office of a governess in a private family:—

In undertaking the important charge of children, I earnestly recommend thee, in all things, to attend to "the manifestation

of the Spirit, which is given to every man to profit withal," not placing too much reliance on thy own strength or thy own judgment. "Trust in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not to thy own understanding." Remember always to act towards the dear children, as if in the presence of the Lord, and in all thy dealings with them do that which thou believest would be acceptable in his sight. Next to their religious studies: endeavour to impress on the minds of the children their duties towards their parents, lead them by every means in thy power to love, obey, and respect them. Always bear in mind that, with children, example has far more effect than precept; for, without setting a right example in all things, advice and correction avail but little. This should lead to caution in all thy words and actions, as well as to the cultivation of good habits in all thy employments. Employ thy leisure time in endeavouring to improve thyself, which thou wilt find very necessary as the children advance in age—thy stock of knowledge and useful information should be continually increasing—and, above all, endeavour to secure some time for retirement and for the regulation of thy own mind. Whatever be the dispositions of the children under thy care, and whatever be the little difficulties and trials which thy situation may subject thee to, endeavour to bear all with patience, not giving way to a spirit of discontent or fretfulness. Be careful not to correct a child under the first impression of displeasure or vexation; always wait till thy own mind is cool and collected; so that a correction, whether it be by word or punishment, (if the power of punishment is committed to thee) may never be given for the gratification or relief of thy own feelings, but only for the good of the child; this would prevent thy speaking hastily or unguardedly to them or before them, which has often an injurious effect on the minds of children. In all thy dealings with them endeavour to be strictly just and impartial towards each; be cheerful and conciliating in thy manners towards them, but never sanction the least thing that is wrong, or rude and vulgar,

that thou mayest gain their respect as well as love. By being kind and affectionate towards them, good-natured to others, rendering those about thee every service in thy power, thou wilt encourage the children, more than by many words, to love and be kind to one another, and to serve their fellow-creatures. Endeavour to convince them that doing good to others is one of the greatest pleasures in life. Let thy actions justify thy words in all things; on this account never threaten correction or punishment unless it be thy intention to perform it, nor promise reward, or encouragement, unless thou carefully fulfil it. In teaching children, remember it is better that they should learn a little thoroughly, than a great deal superficially. Endeavour to instruct them in those things that are useful rather than ornamental; at least, let the most useful branches of education take the first place.

First-day, 24th.—An exercising meeting to me. I was constrained once more to come forth a little in the work of the ministry. This, I think, is rather increasingly difficult to my natural feelings. I spoke on the words of our Saviour, "Nevertheless, in this rejoice not," &c.; but rather rejoice that your names are written in the book of life. This, as it is an infinitely important subject for examination, so it is also the only substantial source of rejoicing,—applicable to the different states in the church. To those called into much service, *this* must not be their reliance, but *only* whether they have just cause for hope that their names are written in the book of life. Those who fill less conspicuous situations, whose works may be hidden from their fellow-creatures, must not be discouraged, but rather look to their foundation. Have *they* also the same hope? To the careless and indifferent the appeal is a solemn and awful one. In the hour of death and judgment, the only important thing *then* is, not whether we have rejoiced or mourned in this world, but whether our names are "written in the Book of Life."

26th.—Morning at Norwich. Visited the workhouse and Bridewell to some satisfaction.

Second Month 1st.—Rachel and I went to Pakefield.

First-day, 7th.—This was one of those interesting days not soon to be forgotten. After breakfast we visited the schools. Dear Joseph joined us from Halesworth: and when we had seen the people of the parish go off to "church," we retired to our own quiet little meeting, where a rather large congregation was assembled, for a *Pakefield* meeting. I felt comforted in the renewed belief that the Bread of Life, which is Christ Jesus our Lord, is offered to all; and had to recommend our seeking, by prayer and faith, to partake of it; that we may eat thereof and not die. During the afternoon, I visited some poor persons, and we met again at tea, after which most of our party adjourned to the school, where F., (her brother-in-law Francis Cunningham) has all the children, and many of the parents, assembled on a First-day evening. I sat with dear —— in our room. A general meeting together ended this interesting day.

8th.—We spent the morning together, reading, talking, and walking. Lady Gosford was ill, and Rachel and I went to see her in the evening. My heart, though full of love, was oppressed; and I could not find utterance for that which was in my mind toward her. I have often to pass through much hidden inward exercise of mind, before the way opens for my relief: but we must wait patiently until the opening be made.

9th.—After some hours of lowness and mental conflict, I was enabled, before we separated, to pray for the Divine blessing upon us, individually and unitedly, and, in an especial manner for dear Francis and Chenda.* *11th.*—Reached home.

14th.—A meeting of feeling to me. I had to repeat the warning language of the Redeemer,—"If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin,

* The familiar name which Richenda Cunningham bore in the family circle.—Ed.

but now they have no cloak for their sin." Afterwards I visited some sick Friends, the workhouse and school.

Priscilla was, on the 24th, rendered very anxious by an account of her dear sister E. Fry's being "very seriously ill." This circumstance has, she says, "cast clouds over everything."

26*th*.—A better account of our dear sister. This week closes with a renewed sense of the mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord. I have had to say a few words before dinner, both at the Grove and at Keswick, during the week. This is a service *hard* to my own will, and always *much* in the cross: but still, I must bear testimony to the truth that, even *here*, the cross of Christ leads to the crown.

First-day, 28*th*.—I felt very closely exercised and engaged in spirit this morning, which, after some conflict, ended in vocal supplication for various states, especially for the servants of the Lord, who, having to advocate his cause, feel that they not only wrestle against the infirmities of flesh and blood, but against principalities, &c. In this prayer I felt my most beloved sister E. F. brought near to my heart—and also I prayed for those who are less conspicuously, but not less sincerely, devoted to their God; and also for those who still sleep with the enemy at hand—and may we not add the petition that the Lord may hear our cries for ourselves and others.

Third Month 1*st*.—I felt very languid and low. After some hours at home I paid a visit to a poor woman at Cringleford, and also to L. C. To the latter I was enabled to address a few words of encouragement.

2*nd*.—Morning in Norwich. Our dear visitors, Lady Gosford, &c., came, and we much enjoyed their company.

4*th*.—It was a comfort and refreshment before we parted to be at meeting together. I had to say a little on the animating words of our Saviour, "Be of good cheer, I have

overcome the world." Before we separated, Joseph expressed the comfort he felt in the love which unites true Christians under all circumstances; recalling to our remembrance the prayer of our Redeemer, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." After an early dinner I came with Lady G. to Runcton. We had a sweet ride together.

6th.—After our morning's reading, I was enabled to return thanks for the blessings which we had so richly enjoyed together, and to pray for a continuance of the Divine care over us. I felt much humbled afterwards, and was made deeply sensible of my own weakness as an instrument. Lady G. and I had an interesting journey to Brampton; we read the Epistle of John, and much of Henry Martyn's Life. It was affecting to arrive at Lady C's. Lord G. had got there before us. He read the scriptures and prayers to the servants, in the room appropriated to those purposes. The whole thing was affecting to my feelings. I believed it was my place to sit quietly through their religious services.

First-day, Third Month 7th.—Lord G. very kindly took me to meeting, which was comforting; for my spirit was closely exercised in various ways. I hope I was enabled to fulfil the little services called for—and between the meetings I visited the Pakefield schools. Returned to Brampton to dinner. The evening assembly of servants peculiarly interesting; and when the service was over, I felt constrained to kneel down, and humbly to supplicate for the household, for the absent head of the family, and her beloved child, that the afflictive dispensations of the Lord might be abundantly blessed to themselves and others; and especially for those present, that they might be increasingly and nearly united in the love of God, and partake of the grace of their Redeemer. There was a great solemnity over us, and we parted, I believe, in love. I was exhausted on retiring to bed and slept but little. I feel the seriousness of my calling increasingly, and in being thus

engaged, I am a little made sensible that we must *lose our life*, if we would find it *in Christ*.

8*th*.—Took leave of my dear friends, and felt much quietness and peace, under the renewed sense of the Lord's mercy and goodness towards me. Came to Huntingdon — thence to Cambridge, where I enjoyed a warm meeting with our dear friend Charles Simeon, and was refreshed by his company and flow of christian love. Thence I came forward in the coach by myself to Lynn. I was glad to find myself once more at Runcton.

11*th*.—To Downham with Aunt B.— very small meeting. I felt myself comforted, and had to speak on the words of our Saviour, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." The christian traveller soon finds there is a death of *self* to die, a life to lose, if you would find it in Christ. This life in Christ is a wonderful recompense for every loss; one of those lives must prevail and obtain the victory. *Query*.—How is it with us? Supplication for these dear friends, that the anointing may still be their teacher—the Holy Comforter their guide, support, and consolation. Called on ——, and had a religious opportunity with her and her daughter; but my spirit was low and under oppression. I sometimes feel, in myself and in others, as if the Spirit of the Lord was under oppression, as a "cart under sheaves."

First-day, Third Month 14*th*.—Meeting at Lynn. I sat down under an almost overwhelming sense and feeling of infirmity and poverty; but help was mercifully given in the time of need, and I felt not only a little revived in spirit myself, but was enabled to address the language of encouragement to others, on coming unto Christ, our only defence, refuge, and consolation, and also to offer up the language of supplication for the travellers Zionwards, of whom there are several, I cannot but believe, in this reduced meeting. The afternoon meeting was also relieving; and I paid several visits to the Friends, and endeavoured, according to the little ability

given, to comfort some of them on their way; but, alas! how great is my own inward weakness and poverty.

15*th.*—Dined with the Edwards's, and had a comfortable day with these beloved friends.

16*th.*—Quiet day at Runcton.

17*th.*—Went with Rachel to Wisbeach. The day was an exercising one to me. I was, however, comforted at the meeting, and in sympathy with the few friends in this place in their lonely situation, and in the reflection that Christ is the only door into the sheepfold, and that this door is open to all. Returned to Runcton.

18*th.*—Rachel and I went to meeting at Lynn, on our way to Fakenham. We reached the Rawlinson's to dinner, and I was glad to meet dear Emma once more at her own house.

19*th.*—Dearest Rachel left us after breakfast. It was painful to me to part from her; but I trust we were both thankful in having been brought together in much near union and love. I endeavoured to devote myself in mind to dear Emma and her husband and children, and became increasingly interested in them and their concerns. We read together, and a very sweet influence of love prevailed over us, so that before we separated I was enabled to commend them unto the Lord and to pray for his blessing upon them.

20*th.*—After addressing a few words of encouragement to dear Emma and her husband, I left them. Had a pleasant journey with Aunt B., and reached home once more before dinner. I was glad to be here again with dear Joseph and Jane, and thankful in having been, in this short but interesting excursion, helped on my way from day to day.

22*nd.*—The School Committee, in which things appeared favourable. Afterwards the select meeting, which was solemn.

23*rd.*—There was much sweetness and unity in the Quarterly Meeting. I was thankful for the encouragement afforded us. I again felt the review of the queries solemn, and had to appeal to my dear friends in the women's meeting as to how our ac-

count stood in the sight of our Almighty and All-seeing Judge.

29*th.*—Morning at Earlham. Visited our people, and fixed to read with the neighbours once in the week. May a blessing attend every little and weak endeavour for the help of others.

30*th.*—Morning at Norwich—schools, workhouse, &c. I felt some comfort and a little encouragement in reading with my poor old women. I was exhausted, and had some hard struggles with myself, and with my own will, which is often disappointed.

Fourth Month 1*st.*—At meeting. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

2*nd.*—I began to read with our neighbours, with a low and fearful mind; but had some encouragement in it.

3*rd.*—I am thankful in having felt some life and hope in the schools lately, which was the case to-day, though not without some labour of body and spirit.

First-day, 4*th.*—Much impressed with the importance of experiencing the presence of the Lord in our hearts, and had to supplicate that we might know the Redeemer in the character of "Emanuel, God with us," as a refiner and purifier and comforter. Visited a poor man near his end, and in great bodily distress. How do the flesh and the heart fail at last! and what a blessing it is for those who know the Lord to be the strength of their lives and their portion for ever! Afternoon meeting—silent, but not comfortless. Joseph much engaged about the poor men in the Castle.

6*th.*—Visited Bedlam and Bridewell. Joseph received interesting letters from E. Harbord about the poor prisoners: two of them are reprieved.

7*th.*—A quiet day at home. I read with our poor neighbours in the evening.

8*th.*—Monthly meeting for the sick poor. Dear Samuel and Elizabeth arrived in the evening, which was a great pleasure.

9*th.*—This was the day called "Good Friday." All my school-children drank tea here. The day was clouded and

melancholy, from the execution of poor Belsham, for whom Joseph and E. Harbord have so zealously interested themselves. Under much exercise I had offered up my supplications for him in the morning.

14*th*.—I visited poor Jonathan B., a young man in a consumption, to whom I addressed a few words, in the cross to my weak nature.

15*th*. — Dear Samuel accompanied me to Wymondham Monthly Meeting, which was upon the whole encouraging and satisfactory. I had to quote the text in Isaiah,—"When the enemy shall come in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

16*th*.—Dear S. and E. left us. Their visit has been very sweet and uniting. I trust that before we separated we were enabled to commend one another unto the Lord, and to pray for the continuance of his mercy and loving-kindness; not, I believe, without some deep sense of his manifold blessings towards us.

First-day, 25*th*.—A full, but rather a low day. The ministry at meeting was much on the subject of death.

Fifth Month 8*th*.—Much exertion in a languid state. Schools, Workhouse, Sick Charity, &c.

10*th*.—Comfortable journey to Plaistow.

11*th*.—Meeting at Plaistow. I felt (and had to express it) that it was a favour to be permitted to partake, though only as of the crumbs that fall from the Master's table.

12*th*.—To Hampstead, to dear Louisa.

17*th*.—Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders. The two sittings comfortable.

18*th*.—The meeting this morning was one long to be remembered. Dear William Forster laid before it his concern to visit America, and some of the West India Islands. He spoke with much feeling and humility. There was a solemn silence after it. Many Friends expressed their entire unity; and, indeed, the whole body seemed brought into one feeling and one spirit. Dear Anna spoke beautifully, and with power, declaring the

goodness and mercy of the Lord which had hitherto followed them, and expressed her strong desire that her beloved husband might be upheld, comforted and encouraged. The whole meeting seemed affected. Their striking example of submission and resignation has been edifying, and deeply instructive.

19*th.*—The women's meeting began comfortably. I had to address a few words of encouragement to the young people before the close of the meeting.

24*th.*—The state of the Indians, which was brought before the meeting, interested me; but I long to hear of more religious service amongst them. But it was an encouragement that, whilst they have been persecuted and oppressed by others, they have invariably been protected and assisted by Friends. I am more and more convinced that our principles lead to love. Abigail Pim spoke of the evils of this world, arising from *selfishness*, and warned all against this corrupt principle of self-love. I much desired to take it home.

28*th.*—We were visited by Joseph Gurney and Robert Fowler. The former dwelt upon the important effects of female influence upon men, and encouraged wives, sisters, &c. to watchfulness over their own spirits, to exercise this influence rightly. The petition of the Meeting for Sufferings against capital punishments was read, which brought forward the subject of prisons, and other objects of benevolence, in a very interesting manner.

28*th.*—This afternoon was the concluding meeting, which was altogether solemn and satisfactory. Towards the close I had to say a few words on the shortness of time, and that whatever our hands find to do we should do it with all our might.

Sixth Month 1*st.*—H. and I went to the Refuge for the Destitute, and afterwards to Dr. Farr, who spoke rather seriously of my present state of health. Spent some time at Islington School.

8*th.*—To Plaistow Meeting with dearest E. F.* Had to say

* Her sister Fry.

a few words (in much weakness) to the faithful few among them, on the words, "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not." I was followed by E. J. F., on the answer of our Lord,—"If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me:" which came home to my heart amidst the variety of people and scenes among whom my lot is cast.

9*th.*—Travelled home.

10*th.*—Recommenced the school at Norwich, with some feeling of comfort.

13*th.*—Received a pressing letter from dear R. to go to Pakefield, to see their poor mother, who appears to be drawing near her close.

14*th.*—We went to Pakefield, and spent the afternoon with A. C., who appears very sweet, quiet and resigned. After much mental conflict, and an earnest desire to move only under the right influence, I was enabled to return thanks for the victory of which, we humbly trusted, she was a partaker, and which is to be obtained through Christ; and to supplicate that the last enemy, which is death, might be so subdued, that it might lose its sting, and the grave its victory.

15*th.*—I sat some time beside our poor invalid, and was comforted by the quietness of her spirit. After their morning's service I was enabled, once more, to supplicate that the mercy and loving-kindness of the Lord might rest on them, and on all their community, and soon after took my leave. How have I acknowledged that the Lord is a present help in time of need.

Seventh Month 10*th.*—Attended to the schools with M. W. Felt oppressed and unwell, but was enabled to get through the business of the day.

First-day, 11*th.*—The meeting this morning solemn and comforting. Had to say a little on Christ "leaving us an example that we should follow his steps." In no point more important than the entire resignation of the will. Recommenced visiting the adult school. Evening at ——, where I

felt weakened by too much conversation. Oh, how I wanted more stillness and quietness of mind!

Eighth Month 16*th.*—Left home with dear Joseph and Jane, and reached Hunstanton in the evening.

First-day, 18*th.*—To meeting at Lynn, which was interesting. Several serious Methodist sailors came in, and sat with uncommon stillness. I had to address them and others on that encouraging text, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Paid several visits afterwards to the sick.

21*st.*—From Lynn to Upton. Felt low—but have been helped from day to day.

24*th.*—Joined the party at Plashet at their French lessons; overstrained my voice, which was very weak; was poorly all the rest of the day. In the evening I was much oppressed in body, and still more in spirit; and, on retiring to my own room, I was surprised, but not much agitated, by the breaking of a blood-vessel. A low and feverish night ensued, but I did not feel at all alarmed.

25*th.*—I was ill, but not uneasy. In the evening I passed through a serious conflict, from a return of the hemorrhage, accompanied by much difficulty in breathing.

26*th.*—In the evening had a slight return of the bleeding.

27*th.*—I thought myself better, and was altogether comfortable; but was, through unwatchfulness, overset in the evening. We applied leeches. I had a deeply trying night, and was very ill.

28*th.*—I was very much sunk during this day; and, to my own feelings, it was a conflict between life and death; but through infinite mercy, I *felt*, and, according to my very small measure, *believed* in the power of the Redeemer to overcome death. We had some edifying and instructive time together, though it was a day of much trial. Dr. Farr came in the evening, and comforted and encouraged us.

29*th.*—Rather better to-day, but the night was one of much

conflict. Death was brought very closely before me: but I now feel thankful in having been enabled, through the mercy of our Lord, to view death with hope and tranquillity.

The reader, who has thus far traced, in Priscilla Gurney's course, the remarkable exemplification of the gospel spirit, that breathes, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and goodwill towards men," will doubtless be impressed with sympathetic interest, by these affecting entries in her journal; and will be prepared for the heavy cloud which overshadowed her path, during the few remaining steps of her earthly pilgrimage;—a cloud through which, nevertheless, the bright effulgence of the Sun of Righteousness shed upon her soul the radiance of heavenly light and peace. Four weeks after the alarming attack she writes:—

I have been gradually recovering from this very serious illness. It has been a memorable and an instructive time; and I have inexpressible cause for thankfulness. I am left in a low state of spirits, and low as it regards the things of this world; but may I still place all my trust in the Lord, who has done so much for me, and be enabled to commit all my way unto Him. I have had great comfort from all my beloved brothers and sisters, and also from the love and sympathy of our numerous kind friends and relations. I must just note down, how much I have been confirmed in the importance of religious instruction during this illness, on having the mind properly informed on the truths of the gospel—these truths, through the power of grace, often return with fresh life in the hour of need.

By the direction of her medical advisers, Priscilla Gurney was removed to the Isle of Wight. She was accompanied by her beloved sister Rachel; and on the

25th of Ninth Month, after arriving at Ryde, she writes:—

I was fatigued and poorly. If we would secure anything like perfect peace it is indeed most needful that the mind should be kept staid on God.

First-day, Tenth Month 3rd.—Enjoyed some retirement of spirit this morning, and visited, mentally, those from whom we are now separated. Whilst disabled from all active service and employments, how important it is that such a time should lead to deep self-examination! My mind is not capable of much continued reflection; but may I endeavour, like Mary, to sit at the feet of the Redeemer, to wait upon Him, and to hear his word.

TO ELIZABETH BARCLAY.

Isle of Wight, Ninth Month, 1819.

I have felt peculiarly near to thee, my dear Elizabeth, in sympathy and understanding, when to my own feelings I seemed wholly uncertain as to life or death. It was a comfort to think of thee, and remember how the same power had mercifully supported and sustained us in the hour of need. Such proofs of the unremitting love of the Redeemer ought to animate and encourage us to hold on our way, and to follow Him with more devotedness of heart. There are times when, I trust, this has been the effect upon my mind; but I have been often much cast down since by internal lowness, and a sense of my weakness, as well as something of a reluctance to enter the conflicts of the present state again. I have been so thoroughly disabled that it is no longer a question, but a necessity, to retire from the field of action, and I should not be surprised if the present system of care proved beneficial (through the Divine blessing—for what are all our efforts without it?) for the future. I am very doubtful whether I shall ever recover much power of voice again; but this point, as well as all others, I desire to

leave; I should be well content, if it be the will of our dear Lord and Master, to be more withdrawn from anything of public service, and to lead a more secluded life. The future is remarkably in obscurity to me; it is good to feel we have here no continuing city. We are very pleasantly situated at this place, and enjoy our retreat from the world.

First-day, Tenth Month 10th.—I feel my absence from meetings; and from that precious communion which, in meeting together, we have so often enjoyed.

16th.—I consulted Dr. Hamilton, who took an unfavourable view of my case, which I felt seriously, but not painfully. It would, I think, give me little real concern to believe that my continuance here was not likely to be long. I shrink, however, too faithlessly from the prospect of suffering.

Extract from a letter to a friend, Tenth Month 28th, 1819:—

"My experience has long been that of walking through the *valley* to which I *see* not the end; yet a quiet hope generally prevails that I shall be upheld through it; that it may be the passage to more of the glorious liberty of the children of God, even here. But should it prove the "valley of the shadow of death," still I believe there is cause for faith and confidence that the good Shepherd will be with me; that his rod and his staff will comfort me. I cannot but hope that this wilderness journey, and my many low estates, will be blessed in more effectually shaking all self-dependence, and in leading me to place my trust more simply and more faithfully on the Saviour as our only hope of glory. I do truly long to have my heart more enlarged in humble thankfulness for the many eminent blessings granted to us *all*, and to dear J. J. G. and Jane in so especial a manner, enriched, as I believe they are, not only by the fulness of the earth but the dew of heaven.

About the 28th of Tenth Month she addressed a letter

to her beloved cousin Maria Fox, from which the following is an extract, dated from Ryde:—

Whilst I am remarkably withdrawn from actual service, I cannot but, I believe, more than ever rejoice for those who are willing in life and conversation, and in whatever way they may be called, to advocate the ever-blessed cause and gospel of the Redeemer. It is impossible for me not to encourage all to draw near unto Him, to sit at his feet, and to hear and obey his word. I cannot doubt He will still be thy light and salvation, and, inasmuch as thou art enabled to trust in Him, the *strength of thy life* in every needful time. I can speak a little from solemn experience, in being brought, as I thought, to the near view of death and eternity, of the blessedness of those who are the faithful followers of the Redeemer. It was clearly and deeply manifested to me, and in such a way as, I trust, may never be forgotten by me. I long to be strengthened *myself*, and to encourage others to *follow* Him: I cannot see any other way, than through *humility and obedience*, of coming to that experimental knowledge of the only true God and of Jesus Christ as our Saviour, which I felt more strongly in my late illness than I ever felt before, is *eternal life*. I am almost ashamed of sending forth the word of encouragement to you, when I am leading a life of ease and indulgence, and am brought to a state of much poverty myself; I do, however, I hope, accept with thankfulness this season of rest and recreation of mind and body. The apparent probability of giving up the present life, though solemn and awful, was not without a sense of the unspeakable blessing of knowing Christ to be our "resurrection and our life." I can indeed acknowledge that the *cross* has been accompanied with inexpressible mercy, so that I ought not to shrink, as my weak nature is sometimes inclined to do, from the prospect, as it were, of the warfare. R. and I enjoy reading together, and are interested in some objects for the poor, though in the most limited way. I cannot but anxiously desire

that you may still be encouraged (and whoever are engaged in the care of children) in *watching* for every right opening for their religious and *scriptural* instruction. I cannot very well express in words how *important* I felt this object to be in the Society during my illness. To have the *truths* of religion early impressed on the mind appears to me to be of the highest importance; what may be for a long time as only the dead letter, often arises in the remembrance with "newness of life." How I felt this in the time of deep conflict!

Eleventh Month 5th.—We left Ryde; not, I trust, without some thankful sense of the blessing of the Lord. We reached the Sand Rock Hotel (at Niton); pleasantly situated, and sheltered by the rocks; commanding a fine view of the sea. A most comfortable and luxurious retreat from the world and its cares.

10th.—Rachel and I went to the village of Niton to enquire a little about the poor. It would be a great comfort if a door for some little usefulness were opened for us here.

LETTER FROM P. G. TO A BELOVED FRIEND.

I do not know how to express to thee all that has passed through my mind, on thy account, in my wakeful hours this morning. I longed for thy encouragement and consolation amidst the conflicts which attend thy path, from without and from within; and I felt with unusual comfort the blessedness of that language of the dear Redeemer,—"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom." How wonderfully is the tribulated path of the christian traveller set forth in these few words, and how glorious and animating is such an end to his pilgrimage, even an entrance into the kingdom of his Lord. During my illness, and in my subsequent state of weakness, and in the midst of many conflicts and distressing infirmities, my spirit has been made, I hope, humbly sensible of the excellency of the know-

ledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and of the unsearchable riches of his grace, so that all things have really appeared to me as "loss" in comparison; and I could almost have longed that the time were drawing nigh, when I might be released from the bondage of *corruption*, and be made partaker of the glorious and eternal liberty of the children of God. It has been most truly worth passing through much suffering to have been permitted, as it were, one glimpse within the veil: it is one thing to hear, and to speak, and to exhort, on the love of Christ and the joys of his salvation, and another thing to *feel them*. I hope I do not make this acknowledgment to thee of some of the inmost thoughts of my heart presumptuously: never was I more feelingly made sensible of my own nothingness and unworthiness, and that it is only in *our weakness* that the strength of the dear Redeemer can be made perfect.

First-day, Eleventh Month 14th.—After a restless night, I enjoyed some portion of sweet peace and serenity of mind during this day. I was made sensible, more than usual, of the precariousness of my present state of health, and seriously felt the importance of pressing toward the mark for the prize. Rachel began her First-day School with some encouragement.

15th.—I was better again. A quiet, peaceful and happy day. How thankful I ought to be, for having every want supplied, and for the many privileges of this situation.

20th.—This last week has been one of sweet peace and composure of mind and spirit. Our dear Lord, in his own time, after leading us through the deep waters, and giving us a taste of our manifold corruptions and infirmities, is still pleased to restore, unto his poor, dependent children, the joys of his salvation. They have been clearly manifested to my inmost spirit, and I have felt that all things are but as loss compared to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. If my health and strength be restored, oh, that they may be more singly, more faithfully dedicated unto Him! But if I am not

to return to the world,—if I am not to be from henceforth a labourer in his vineyard, may my whole spirit, soul and body, be preserved blameless until his coming. May I be redeemed and sanctified, and prepared for his heavenly, holy and eternal kingdom. In reviewing the volume of my journal, I desire to acknowledge, with deep humility and thankfulness, the loving-kindness and tender mercies of our Lord. My dear Redeemer has not forsaken me in heights and depths. His Comforter has been my only sufficient support and consolation,—my only safe Guide, Light and Counsellor. In all my future movements may I surrender myself entirely to Thee, O Lord! May I be brought, by thy own Spirit, to desire, that not *my* will, but *thine* may be done.

On the 18th of the following month, Priscilla Gurney addressed the subjoined letter to her beloved cousin, Elizabeth Barclay, who had been one of the two dear invalids that had been objects of her tenderly affectionate solicitude during the sojourn at Nice, in the winter of 1816–1817.

Niton, Twelfth Month 18th, 1819.

My Dearest Elizabeth,

My heart has been so much, so nearly, so sweetly with thee, as I have been a great deal in my bed during the last few days, that I really must send thee a letter. How very often I follow thee and dear Agatha in mind, and retrace the scenes of interest which we have passed through together. Being an invalid, and nursed and watched by dear Rachel, continually recalls you to my mind. I seldom mount my pony for our walk without having thee before me. I find that thou hast suffered from the late very cold weather. I can feel for thee in thy illness and infirmities; for, though I do not compare my much slighter indisposition with thine, yet I often suffer enough to make me turn with love and sympathy towards my dear tried companions in this pilgrimage. Thy patience and submission, and I believe I

may add thy humble-mindedness, (I do not attribute these christian graces to thyself,) are comforting and encouraging to me. I can desire for thee, my beloved cousin, that whatever may yet be the dispensation of a merciful Providence towards thee, whether heights or depths, thy light may shine more and more unto the perfect day, and this not only for thy own sake, but for all around thee. Surely thy illness has, through Divine grace, been blessed to them, as well as to thyself. I have found that my infirmities are humbling, and therefore hope to find them a profitable lesson. My whole nervous system has been a good deal affected by my illness, so that occasionally I have had much to pass through. I have had a deep sense and taste of my manifold weaknesses; but I have, indeed, cause most thankfully to acknowledge, that if I have had to learn more of myself, more of my poverty and frailty, and of the proneness of our nature to evil and corruption, I have also experienced and seen more of the marvellous power of the Redeemer to deliver from death and sin than I ever experienced before; so that now and then I could almost unite in the language of the Psalmist,—"Thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." It is an unspeakable blessing, and worth suffering for, that in the midst of all our tribulations, and that though now we see through a glass darkly, yet we are now and then permitted to have a clearer view of an eternal state of rest and real blessedness; though I feel, indeed, so little prepared to meet suffering and death,—so little fitted for an entrance into that state,—yet I must confess the illness I have passed through has had the effect, I believe, of weaning my heart from the world. I feel, at times, but little inclination to enter into the cares and interests of life again. I have, indeed, for a time, been remarkably and most unexpectedly taken from them; and our present profound retirement and seclusion are truly accordant to my taste of mind and body. Dearest Rachel is a comfortable and delightful companion for me, and we are thoroughly happy

together: she is a good deal interested in a First-day School here. We never, I think, anywhere met with the same eager spirit to attend it as in this village. I should think she may be made the instrument of some little good in this place: the people sadly want care and instruction, but are open-hearted, and very pleasing. As for me, I am indeed laid as it were upon the shelf. I trust I feel that there are many blessings—many privileges in this dispensation, though I almost dread falling into habits of indulgence and indolence of mind as well as body. Rest is, however, I believe, permitted to be my portion for the present. I feel my separation from Friends and meetings, and sometimes long for the sweet and precious communion so eminently, to my mind, to be enjoyed amongst them. But I trust my heart is in some measure capable of loving and uniting with all true Christians, feeling that we have, indeed, but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

In the same month she writes to her sister Louisa Hoare—

Sand Rock Hotel, Twelfth Month 7th, 1819.

The last two or three months, though I have passed through some conflict and trials, have yet been a period of much comfort, and often of tranquillity and peace of mind, and especially since we have been here. I never, that I remember, experienced so much of the wonderful consolations of the Gospel, or was so deeply sensible of the unsearchable riches of the Redeemer. It is, indeed, an unspeakable blessing, sometimes during our pilgrimage here, to be refreshed by the view of an eternal state of blessedness and rest. This has been more realized to my mind than I almost ever have known it before; and I long for myself, and for those most near to me, that we could, with more faith and submission of will, "count all things but as loss, that we may win Christ and be found in Him," &c. I am inclined very weakly to shrink from entering into the conflicts, cares and interests of life again, I have been so sheltered from them for

a time. It is in vain, however, to expect, and we ought not to desire, to find our resting-place here.

Twelfth Month 25*th.*—My mind engaged on the subject of love. Oh, how wonderfully comprehensive are the Scriptures on this christian grace! I reviewed this morning many years that are past and gone. "The ways of the Lord are unsearchable, and his judgments past finding out."

Twelfth Month 26*th.*—I was permitted this morning to feel the efficacy and consolation of prayer, and enabled to cast my burdens (and they are often weighty, but none so overwhelming as sin,) on the Lord my Saviour. He knoweth that my way is often in the depths, that my future is involved in clouds; but He can make it plain.

28*th.*—My religious services have been much obstructed of late, but the spring is yet sometimes opened. I felt this after our morning reading; and we were, I trust, permitted to approach the throne of grace in prayer, through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate.

Twelfth Month 31*st.*—Our Bible communications with our dear friends are exceedingly to my comfort. The evening was solemn, and we were called to some serious reflection upon the past year. My spirit was a little burdened; but I found no opening for relief. We must indeed wait on the Lord till He is pleased to renew our strength, till He lift up the light of his countenance upon us in the midst of our darkness.

CHAPTER IV.

1820–1821.

PRISCILLA GURNEY RETURNS FROM THE ISLE OF WIGHT TO EARLHAM—RECURRENCE OF ALARMING INDISPOSITION—IS REMOVED TO THE COAST—SETTLES AT CROMER HALL—LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH.

First Month 1*st*, 1820.—A day of much serious and solemn feeling. In the morning I had to plead for the renewings of the Holy Spirit, which prayer I feel to be mercifully answered. A fine winter's morning. We continued our village visits, and I felt some increased capacity for exertion. A letter in the afternoon from dear Chenda, giving a most affecting account of a shipwreck on their coast (near Yarmouth). Well may we say, —"Thy ways, O Lord! are past finding out." My whole mind, during this day, seemed clothed with the spirit of self-humiliation, and of supplication in the beginning of *yet another year*. After our reading the springs were mercifully opened, and a little utterance was given me. We were, I believe, unitedly brought to humble ourselves, and to know something of a deep sense of the necessity of repentance before our God, in remembering the transgressions and manifold weaknesses of our lives during the past year: at least, this was strongly my own individual impression. I felt called upon to commend our little community here, as well as our beloved friends absent from us, to the tender mercy—the directing and preserving care of the Good Shepherd, with the desire that our being withdrawn for a season from the world, and brought into our present circumstances, may be a means of edification to our souls, and, if it please the Lord our Saviour, of good also to our fellow-

creatures. It was indeed the sincere and fervent prayer of my heart for myself, and for those most near and dear to me, that, whatever may be the dispensations of our God towards us during the year on which we have now entered, neither life nor death, heights nor depths, things present nor yet to come, may be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. We parted this evening in love, and, I fully believe, in a measure of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and my poor, weak, and often depressed spirit, was, through the mercy of the dear Redeemer, a little refreshed and comforted in the Lord.

First-day, First Month 3rd.—An impressive family reading; after which I had to say a few words on the important text,—"Blessed are those servants that are found watching," &c. Examination of the past year: this should be instrumental to our preservation for the time to come—*being always ready.*

7th.—One of our delightful and peaceful days.

9th.—We had the comforting intelligence of our dearest Hannah's* being safely confined with another girl. I trust our hearts were bowed in thankfulness to the Father of Mercies, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift: this I had to express in a few words after our family reading.

First-day, 10th.—A day of more serenity and peace of mind than I have for some time enjoyed.

11th.—The weather cold: my chest indifferent: my spirit encompassed with clouds.

14th.—Rachel went to the village and visited the poor. How completely are all my abilities laid low! May the many humiliating and proving lessons that I have lately received teach me to live more unto Thee, O Lord! and less unto myself.

18th.—Some conversation with dear Rachel on my future prospects. May I have no choice of my own, as it regards my future path, but commit it wholly and simply to God. In this alone I find rest and peace.

* Her sister Buxton.

21*st*.—T. W. (a clergyman from Ryde) left us, after being, I trust, united in prayer that we might together be made partakers of the love of God that passeth knowledge.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO HER SISTER HOARE.

Sand Rock, Seventh-day Evening, First Month 23rd, 1820.

We shall not I think forget to visit one another in mind to-morrow. It is very sweet (and how much ought it to be cultivated) to unite in communion on our "Sabbath" days. It is now nearly five months since my First-days have been spent in retirement, and very much in solitude. I am sure they ought to be profitable to my own mind. I too often, however, suffer from languor of spirit as well as body. The thought of meeting you all again is very delightful. Sometimes I shrink a little from the prospect of re-entering the stage of life. Nothing, however, can be more unwise, or indeed more unfaithful, than to be apprehensive for the future, when everything ought to make us "trust and not be afraid." The best way to secure tranquillity of mind is to confine our views to the present, and to commit ourselves unreservedly to Him, who can do all things for us, and give us strength in our weakness. How I sometimes long for more of this spirit for and about myself and others!

First Month 24*th*.—Dear Rachel and I were together this morning, and were permitted, through the sweet influence of the Spirit, to be united in prayer, both for ourselves and for the absent members of our scattered family, as well as for all the members of the Church of Christ. It is truly a blessed thing to feel that we are partakers of the same hope—having "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," one Father over all. Our evening sweet and uniting. I had to say a few words on the importance of our being *doers of the Word and not hearers only*. Oh, may every fresh experience lead us more humbly, more earnestly, to the prayer,—"Lead us in thy truth and teach us."

First-day, 31*st*.—A day of much peace and encouragement to me: less care for the future: some reliance on the power and mercy of the Redeemer, whose arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear. I wrote a little on the subject of *love and family harmony*.

In directing the attention of the reader to the instructive observations which were now penned by the dear invalid, (as referred to in the last entry in her journal,) it may well be accompanied by some reflections on the remarkable evidence, afforded by the circumstances of the Earlham family, of the *practical influence* of Priscilla Gurney's sentiments, not only on her own mind, but also upon each one of the interesting circle. Whilst, as it referred to their religious course, some of them trod in paths that led into external observances varying much from the track conscientiously pursued by others of the household and nearest connexions, there was, throughout, preserved amongst them a very careful and tender regard to the feelings of each one, with a most affectionate and constant solicitude for the welfare and comfort of all; and, under circumstances of sickness or affliction, they exhibited a rare example of self-sacrificing devotedness of every energy of body and mind to console and to assist the beloved ones who were in suffering or in sorrow.

ON CHRISTIAN LOVE AND FAMILY HARMONY.

The command to love one another from the highest authority, is taught not only by the doctrines, but by the example of our Lord, who went about doing good, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you."—John xv. 12. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you; that ye also love one another."—John xiii. 34. There are few things that I have so much

desired in christian communities as that this holy influence of love were a more actuating and prevailing principle amongst them. We see much of universal benevolence, but the prevalence of christian love in domestic life is still evidently but too deficient and imperfect. It is so much a general feeling that the ties of natural affection are sufficient for domestic union and harmony; but there are innumerable proofs that this is but a transitory and frail bond, unless supported by the discipline of christian and Divine love; whereas this holy, and blessed, and sanctifying principle, gives strength and stability to natural affection; being itself of a pure and eternal nature, it gives the same stamp to relationships and unions begun in this life. It is impossible that christian love can prevail unless self-love be brought under subjection, and we are called upon to practise forbearance and self-denial even in the enjoyment of the nearest and dearest ties in life. We must love our neighbour as ourselves; we must do unto others as we would be done unto; we must in honour prefer one another. Now, I think we see that these injunctions are often more practically obeyed and observed by Christians in their general intercourse with others, than with their families in their private and domestic life. It is a great error that even religious characters are too apt to fall into, to suppose that we do not want to have our natural affections regulated by Divine love: the former, unassisted by the latter, will never teach us to suffer long and be kind, to envy not, to seek not our own, to bear all things, to hope all things, to believe all things. It is, surely, from this cause that we see so little family union and harmony amongst Christians, too rarely in much perfection even among those of high spiritual attainments in other points. It is very delightful where we witness charity (in its most extensive sense), thus to begin at home. The important subject of family harmony has of late much engaged my attention, and I have been led to reflect on those principles which can alone insure it, and on those causes which too lamentably prevent its prevalence in

the world. The nearer, the closer, the dearer the natural connexion, the more important does this solid foundation and cementing influence become. The nature of human affection is to diminish, to fall away. Divine love is not opposed to natural affection, but gives it strength, value, and duration. Natural love finds no full satisfaction, but christian love alters its character and gives it that which is satisfying, complete, and lasting. Natural love is selfish, but, sanctified by Divine love, it become disinterested and generous. The principles first to be looked for as the fruits of this love are, religious union and religious liberty. Real Christians must be united in essential points. If Christians at all, they must have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all,—and in all." But such is the imperfect state of the church-militant on earth, that these essential and vital truths are viewed through different mediums. The application of these truths to individual experience may be a little different in their religious services and christian practice: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and diversities of operations, but it is the same God who worketh all in all." How deeply it is to be lamented, that these little differences among Christians should be more separating, than the essential grounds of union should be uniting. We must, then, if we would love one another according to the commandment of our Saviour, diligently cultivate such a spirit, as well as conduct, of religious liberty, as would lead us to forbear one with another in love. We must cherish the feelings of interest in one another's welfare. We must "watch unto prayer" for those we love as well as for ourselves, but we must suspend the spirit of judgment. It would be pleasant, indeed, always to walk in the same path, and especially to go together "to the House of God in company;" but since this cannot be, in the present state of things, we must chiefly desire that the will of the Lord may be done. We must look with a single eye unto Him; must remember his injunc-

tion to Peter,—"If I will," &c., "what is that to thee? Follow thou me." On looking a little to this principle of religious liberty, as tending to promote unity and family harmony, it is still evident that the more complete be the union and understanding on religious subjects, the more perfect must be this harmony. And it therefore appears to me a matter of essential importance, that in connexions of marriage there should be similarity of view and union of heart and of mind, on the lesser, as well as on the greater points of christian faith and practice. To walk in the same path, to partake of the same refreshment, to be united in the same objects, to have one mind with regard to their families and households, to be enabled to strengthen one another's hands in their daily walk in life,—must greatly tend to their domestic happiness and good. This complete union, therefore, should be earnestly desired in this most close and near connexion, and it must be considered a great risk and very imprudent, to enter upon it without this accordance. If, however, differences of views on these important subjects should arise, then, in proportion as the connexion is near, should be the watchfulness, that forbearance in love may be experienced one towards the other, that the spirit of religious liberty may be cherished, that the essential points of union may be kept alive in the heart and cultivated, and that the points of discussion may be kept out of sight; and be in no wise suffered to occasion any breach of love. This holds good, also, in all the relations of life,—parents towards children, children towards parents, and brothers and sisters towards one another. Let parents diligently implant in the minds of their children those principles and views which appear to them the most accordant with the truth. If, after the most watchful care and example, the result should be a want of that conformity which they have desired, let not these things, more than can possibly be helped, occasion a breach of love and union, and of family harmony. And, on the other hand, let children yield as much as their conscience will allow them, to the judg-

ment and wishes of their parents: they are called upon to honour their parents, and nothing but the will of God should be stronger to them than the will of their parents.

Second Month 3rd, 1820.—In the afternoon our dearest Samuel, with his boy and R. F., arrived. Very interesting it was to meet again.

4th.—Our whole party excursed to Shanklin. We walked afterwards to Black-gang-chine.

First-day, 7th.—We had a little meeting together. Evening reading with all the party. We were, before reading, drawn together under the sweet influence of the Spirit, and I had to express a few words on the hope that, not only were we united here, but that we might look forward to be joined together in communion in eternity.

8th.—All our party went to Ryde. We parted, I trust comfortably, with dear Samuel, &c.; but I could not be easy to separate without commending one another to the constant, sure, and preserving care of the Shepherd of Israel.

13th.—A sweet and peaceful day. I felt my clouds to be mercifully removed, and the Sun of Righteousness to arise with healing in his wings.

21st.—My breath very poorly; but I have lately felt much internal quietness and peace, which compensates for every external deprivation. I desire to be thankful for the calmness and ease which is at this time granted me about the present and the future.

Third Month 3rd.—In the house all day, and but poorly. I was, I trust, enabled with some little faith to commit my life and spirit into the hands of my dear Redeemer. Oh, how great, how unspeakable the privilege, to feel that, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's!

Second-day, 6th.—I was very weak and low in spirits, and under the influence of much mental conflict. "Who can deliver us from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus

Christ our Lord!" In almost the deepest conviction I ever had of the sinfulness of my own heart, and the power of the enemy. I have also at times experienced the truth, the efficacy and power of this victory.

The disease which had so seriously prostrated the bodily powers of the beloved invalid had been, for a time, arrested in its progress; but its insidious operation was not eradicated. She left the Isle of Wight in the Fourth Month, and returned to Earlham. Her spirit was, at this time, introduced into much sorrowful sympathy with her beloved brother and sister Buxton, who were bereft of three lovely children in the short space of five weeks. This affecting circumstance producing, in her very sensitive condition, a degree of physical excitement, caused a return of the hemorrhage, and from this time she became increasingly ill. Of this renewed indisposition she writes to one of her sisters:—

Earlham, Fifth Month 7th, 1820.

Once more, my dear, I must write to thee from my bed, to which I have been closely confined for the last four days. C., I hope, told thee all the particulars of this attack. It was most unexpected to me. I have, indeed, cause to be very thankful for having, in every way, been mercifully dealt with in this illness. I have been kept in much quietness of mind, and been enabled to feel, in some degree, what is the joy and peace of believing, when our hold on this life is shaken; still this has been accompanied with much infirmity. The sensitiveness of my nervous system is always some trial in illness, and, with other deeper faults and weaknesses, ought to be very humbling. What are likely to be the effects of this attack we cannot yet tell. I confess I have felt this return seriously, and to my own mind it makes the prospect of recovery more doubtful than ever; but I truly desire to leave this and all my concerns to a better wisdom and care than our own.

To another sister—

Fifth Month 12th, 1820.

I have often, through the Divine blessing, (for truly we have nothing of ourselves,) possessed much quietness and composure of mind,—something of that peace which can only be felt and enjoyed when we are kept, by the power and mercy of God, stayed upon him, as our Saviour and Redeemer. So much for the infirmities of the flesh. I must not enlarge upon the much deeper and more pressing infirmities of the mind and spirit. After all, the evils of our own hearts are our greatest trials; at least I am sure I find this to be increasingly my experience. I am at times low and cast down in spirit; but this is not to be wondered at; the afflictions of our beloved brother and sister, which are also our own, must overshadow every enjoyment, and the things of this life must be clouded for the present. We are called upon patiently to submit to our portion of suffering, and most thankfully to acknowledge the consolations and Divine support which have attended this deep family trial. Our blessings have been and are abundant: we may believe that our afflictions are amongst the best of them.

TO F. AND R. CUNNINGHAM

(then in France).

Earlham, Sixth Month 20th, 1820.

My Dearest F. and C.,

I hope you will have received C.'s letters, giving an account of this return of the bleeding. I have been recovering very favourably. I do, I hope, feel very thankful for having been thus mercifully and comfortably brought through this little illness; but it is still a greater blessing that I have been kept (for I am sure we cannot keep ourselves) in a quiet and composed state of mind, and I have felt more sensible comfort and consolation than for a long time past; indeed, this best help has sometimes been so present to me, that I have felt more reconciled to the portion of suffering and trial, which we may be sure

has been in mercy and wisdom administered to us. I have longed that we all, in our various allotments, may keep near to Him who is our Head, and that there we may quietly rest, and seek more and more for a spirit of submission and acquiescence with whatever is dispensed. We have many of us had a time of discipline lately: I have felt this myself. I value being at home much: there is a rest in it which no other place or situation can yield. I hope, dearest C., thou wilt not feel anxious about me. As far as I am able to judge, I have not one symptom in my present state to excite serious anxiety; still it is impossible not to feel the doubtfulness of entire recovery. I cannot say it is much my own expectation; I have for so long a time been getting gradually lower and lower, and my cough is so very tenacious. I am not at all anxious. Such a pause ought, I am sure, to be a time of preparation either for life or death. It is as much our privilege as it is our duty, to endeavour to resign our own will, and to commit our way entirely to our Lord, who can only bring it to pass to His glory and our good. I have felt my separation from dear R. C. It is also a serious loss to have so kind and devoted a friend as Dr. H. withdrawn, whilst I have been so poorly; and yet I can often be thankful when human dependencies are taken away, if it be a means of fixing our hearts more on that help which is from above.

In a letter to the physician, Dr. Hamilton, who had assiduously endeavoured to promote her recovery during her residence on the Isle of Wight, she says, under date Earlham, Sixth Month, 1820:—

One other thing of much more importance has dwelt much on my mind about thee, and therefore I shall express it in writing, though I have often done it in conversation. It is chiefly to tell thee how rejoiced and thankful I am that thou art not disposed to cleave to any particular party in religion. I do truly and warmly desire for thee that thy heart may be

more and more enlarged in the love of the gospel, and be enabled, in this love, to make allowance for the "differences of administrations and of operations," which we still see are permitted to exist in the church of Christ. I cannot help thinking there is some *real danger* in the present day of a more exclusive spirit among some Christians than the scriptures at all justify. I have been particularly struck with the thirteenth of Corinthians, as applicable to individual practice, and as a part of Scripture which can hardly be too much dwelt upon by Christians, and as rather *peculiarly* applicable in the present times: "Though I understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith," &c., "and have not charity, I am nothing." When we see the evils which are in the world, the great proneness to imperfection in all parties in the church militant, and above all, when we *feel* the depth of corruption of the human heart; well may we pray and heartily desire that the truth, as it is in Jesus, may be preserved in its purity and fulness and excellency amongst us.

About two weeks after the foregoing, she addressed her beloved cousin Hannah C. Backhouse:—

Earlham, Sixth Month 30th, 1820.

The future is entirely in obscurity to me, nor do I wish to penetrate it, but rather confine my views to the present, seeking, day by day, for the gift (for I am sure it is nothing of our own) of a meek and *quiet* spirit, which can enable us to receive our daily bread with thankfulness and contentment. I am thankful to say, I am able very much to leave the *past*. I have sometimes felt that if I had more faith, more child-like obedience, my situation might in some things have been different, and my life more fruitful; but we cannot judge ourselves, "there is One that judgeth." Nothing I have found availingly consoling, in illness and the prospect of death, but looking to that mercy and redemption which covers our transgressions and forgives

our sins; but how little and how imperfectly do I comprehend, or really take home, the *fulness* of the gospel dispensation.

The air of Cromer being considered more favourable for her restoration than that of an inland residence, she was induced to remove thither in the early part of the Seventh Month. At that place she writes, for the last time, in her journal:—

Seventh Month 20th, 1820.—My present life presents so remarkably shifting a scene, that I am become weary of relating every little particular; yet I wish, for my own sake, and perhaps that of others, to note down the principal occurrences; having still, and in all things, to declare the goodness, power, and mercy of the Redeemer,—of Him who remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. We left our quiet and peaceful abode in the Isle of Wight on the 11th of Fourth Month, and ended our sojourn there, upon the whole, satisfactorily, though under a heavy cloud from the afflictions of our beloved Fowell and Hannah. The loss of their dear children has been almost the heaviest trial we have ever sustained, and has cast the deepest shade over our temporal prosperity and enjoyment; but I humbly trust a little of that faith which overcometh the world hath supported us, especially their bereaved and afflicted parents. The Everlasting Arm has been underneath to sustain; but the conflicts of the last two months, to some in our circle, have been of no light nature. Our Redeemer has been surely visiting our spirits as the Refiner and Purifier, and we have had to partake, not only of the baptism of the Spirit, but also of fire; this has often been my individual experience. I left my dearest Rachel (so long my companion and nurse,) and accompanied Joseph to Earlham, leaving our beloved circle in much distress. My heart seemed torn by this sudden, but apparently necessary, separation from them all. These conflicts, with other causes, brought on a serious illness after my return home in the Fourth Month. I was most tenderly nursed by

dearest J., and J—e, and E. R. soon after joined us from Fakenham; but my whole body and spirit seemed deeply wounded, and I often doubted whether I ever should recover the effects of it; but surely the voice of the Lord is more powerful than the noise of many waters, and this I have experienced. I spent three months at home, in which I had some serious illness, much close confinement, but, through great mercy, comparatively little bodily suffering. Upon the whole I have been permitted to partake of much peace and serenity of mind; and occasionally something of that bright hope which is unspeakable and full of glory; and I have much enjoyed having dear Catherine as my frequent companion, and being once more at home with my very dear brother and sister there, whose great kindness and affection have been an unspeakable alleviation to the pains and trials of illness. Our life has been retired and much secluded from the world, and accordant with my present state of mind and body. Our scene has now changed to Cromer, where we are settled, for a few weeks, during Joseph's visit to Ackworth.

TO HER SISTER ELIZABETH GURNEY.

Cromer, Eighth Month 2nd.

We have been settled here most comfortably and quietly for a week, and the benefit we have all derived from the change is greater than we could almost expect. I had been so long in a very poor and languid state, that a revival to me of health and strength is a great present enjoyment. The retirement and quiet of our life is as salutary as the air, which has been delightfully warm and mild and yet refreshing. We live much out of doors, lounging on the sands, and riding in our little cart. I have also, the last day or two, mounted a nice donkey. And now, my dearest sister, I must turn to you and your concerns, and which, I am sure, are near my heart. From various causes the last few months have appeared to me a time of remarkable exercise and discipline to many in our circle; we

have had to feel and experience something of the "Refiner's fire," both from within and from without, and many individuals in our own family have been called to the exercise of patience and submission. I have also felt it to myself a time of uncommon proving; but from whence do all our trials and provings spring?—we must not, and cannot, doubt they are needful for us. I have sometimes felt the desire for us all, that our faith, though it may be tried as with fire, may eventually be found unto "praise, glory," &c. I am, of course, now anxious to reserve my strength for the strong interest of being with our dear Hannah. I think of thee, dearest Elizabeth, with warm and grateful affection; thou hast been a sister indeed to me and to us all. I seem to have no strength, I might almost say no calling, for any other object of interest than my own family. My love particularly and affectionately to thy dear mother and to J. and L. I can heartily rejoice to think of their prospering in the best way, and earnestly wish they may persevere without fainting. Our day is short, and how happy for those who are doing their day's work in the day-time! I have seldom felt this more forcibly than of late, though brought into such a state of nothingness myself. Very, very affectionately, farewell.

Thine &c.,

P. G.

It was the desire of her affectionate family, that Priscilla Gurney should pass the ensuing winter in a milder climate. Referring to the consideration of this plan, she writes to one of her sisters, as follows:—

Cromer, Eighth Month 13th.

The question which is soon coming before us, and which is already a subject of consideration in the family circle, is, whether it would, or would not, be a desirable measure for me to go to the South of France for the winter. If, after serious consideration, we should conclude to make the effort, I think it would

not be prudent to commence our journey later than the beginning of the Tenth Month, and it is on this account that we must not delay turning our attention to the subject, though I much dislike, in my uncertain state, to look forward to the future more than can possibly be helped, and if it be a duty to give up home, I am, on many accounts, more inclined to the South of France, except on this account, that it would be necessary to leave home so much the sooner. The attractions to France are meeting F. and C., the motives for it are, that my case still seems to admit of so much hope that, if a sacrifice is to be made, it is better to do it effectually at once. The better I am, the more I am disposed to go abroad, because of the reasonable hope it presents of being of material benefit; but when I am ill, I am very faint-hearted at the prospect, and am doubtful how far I could undertake it. Thus, at present, I am wholly in obscurity as to all future movements, but I am thankful to say I am not anxious; I trust and believe, light will arise on my path, both in reference to things temporal and spiritual.

Increased illness rendered it undesirable to pursue the course which had been anxiously recommended by her physician and nearest connexions, and with some degree of encouragement contemplated by herself. She remained in a house on the cliff at Cromer until the Eighth Month; when she was removed to that of her dear brother and sister Buxton, Cromer Hall, which, from its sheltered situation, appeared a very suitable residence. Here she was tenderly nursed by her bereaved sister, in whose deep affliction she had largely shared.

The succeeding narrative of the few remaining months of Priscilla Gurney's valuable life. is selected from the journals of her sisters H. Buxton, L. Hoare, and Rachel Gurney.

"*August*" 31*st*.—Priscilla and I had some interesting conver-

sation after reading the third chapter of 1st Peter. This Epistle opened to her with such particular force. She remarked that the prospect of meeting those that were gone was animating; that to see God and be with him was our chief hope and joy; but that she believed the wish to be with those whom we love, and to have our connexions with them perfected, was a most allowable source of comfort and encouragement. She dwelt upon this,—that our relationships will be perfected in heaven.

"*September*" 10*th*.—After a day of great illness, R. stayed with her all night. I went to her at seven, found her very low; I expressed my sense of the power and presence of the Lord in her chamber; she replied, "It is true, it is a comfort." I said, even in the conflict yesterday, I could not but feel He was near, sustaining and helping. "I felt it most sensibly," she answered. After she was up, I read the third of Ephesians: her countenance was animated by the description of the love of Christ, and she expressed her admiration of it, as if entering into and comprehending it. We talked of the high spiritual attainments of some Friends, beyond those of any other set of people. W. Forster and S. Grellet, she mentioned as instances, where everything appeared brought into subjection to the power of the Spirit. She thought —— was one of the most constantly on the watch of any she knew. The place of Friends in the church was, she thought, to hold up the highest standard of holiness.

"*September*" 14*th*.—P. said, with regard to the fear of death, the bodily part was by nature weak, but that the sting was wholly removed through Christ. She had rather have people silent on the hope set before them in their friends' death. It was a hope in common; but *the flat and supposed necessary mention of such things was to her very unpleasant;* and as to all religious conversations *about* a person, or *to* a person who was on a death-bed, that did not flow from a spring of Divine life within us, it was, she thought, vain and unprofitable.

To seek to find out a person's mind was undesirable: a time of illness and incapacity was not the period when she thought we were called to publish, or particularly to declare, our love to God,—that was to be manifested in the days of health and strength, when we were to shew our love by our services. It was an inexpressible blessing to be left in the days of sickness to *rest*,—not to be called upon to declare or reveal our love by words. She talked much of the power of an endless life, which was at times to be found in attending the dying, but had very seldom trusted this to be the case. "I did with J. W.," she said, who without much profession had lived, she believed, in a waiting spirit. She turned to herself and said, how often did she know this power of Eternal life while lying on her own bed.

15*th*.—P. addressed us before taking leave of us at night,—expressed her thankfulness for the sweet communion we had enjoyed together—something of the joy as well as peace of believing; and she said she had herself never been more sensible than at this time of the power of that voice which says "Peace be still," notwithstanding the sorrow and conflict which we had tasted; and added to —— that it was not the service in which he had been engaged among us, or the gifts that had been exercised for ourselves, but that it was the christian charity which had been shed abroad in his heart towards us that had diffused its sweet influence, and had been both consolatory and uniting to her feelings. "Tongues shall cease and prophecies shall fail," but "charity never faileth;" and that this charity might bind us more and more together was her prayer.

16*th*.—Sitting by Priscilla before she was up this morning: she began by saying she felt very free from disease. What a trial it would be to re-enter life! In some things one dare not wish! (implying a wish to recover) it would indeed be retracing one's steps.

On the 17th of Ninth Month P. G. penned the following lines to her beloved cousin Agatha Barclay, on the occasion

of the decease of her brother Gurney Barclay. The reader will probably remember that both the brother and sister had been amongst Priscilla's companions in the mournful sojourn at Nice, in 1817.

Cromer Hall, Ninth Month 17th, 1820.

Though I am too weak in body and mind to say much on this affecting and mournful occasion, I cannot be easy without expressing my near and deep sympathy and tender feeling for you all. The loss of dearest Gurney comes closely home to my own heart. Though of late we have had but little intercourse, yet I was strongly attached to him, and have known what it is to be sweetly united to him in spirit. Those times I hope never to forget; the weight, the comfort, the spirituality of his influence, lives in my remembrance, and most thankful am I for the evidence which he himself so often gave me, that he possessed the knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ his Redeemer, which, we may now humbly and thankfully trust, is to him eternal life. Yet the warning to us all is solemn and awful. Oh, that we may profit by it! May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! Farewell, my dearest Agatha! We have known what it is to mourn together.

Most affectionately thine,

PRISCILLA GURNEY.

TO MARIA FOX.

Cromer Hall, Eleventh Month 20th, 1820.

I have often had to review the past very seriously, as thou mayest suppose; and I believe I may say in this work (of the ministry) though I am aware how limited it has been, I can remember few occasions in which the way has not been made for me. No circumstances in society, no difficulties or discouragements, have prevailed against these manifestations of the Spirit of Truth; for if we believe at all, what else can we call them? Nor have I, that I remember, ever had occasion to

repent yielding to them. Now I would not make this confession to many, and I am sure I say it not in the way of boasting, but rather with an humble and thankful sense of the marvellous loving-kindness and tender mercy of the Lord, who in this particular service has brought me to submit to his will,—who has, I believe I may say, invariably made hard things easy, and many, many times, bitter things sweet. Most happy should I be, could I believe that in other parts of my calling I had as simply followed the leadings and most gracious guidance of the Shepherd. He only knows how far too much I have followed the devices and desires of my own heart—how far too little I have committed myself in my ways unto Him, inasmuch as in those things in which I have been anxious to choose for myself, I have had many conflicts to pass through, and have been involved in many perplexities. But, deeply sensible as I am of my short-comings, &c. I have had some comforting assurance of the unsearchable riches of Christ, as our Redeemer from sin and from death. In the prospect of the uncertainty of life, and the probability of a nearness to death, I have, I believe, known a little what it is to cast all our burdens on Him who hath suffered for us, and have had some glimpse, at least, of that only state of preparation for a heavenly, and a holy, and eternal state, the being "washed white in the blood of the Lamb." A child-like submission, a waiting and quiet spirit, is the one to be devoutly sought for. I fear not, inasmuch as thou art brought into this frame of mind, but that thou wilt be led quietly and safely in the way appointed, and that light will arise, again and again, in the midst of darkness. Do not perplex thyself with anxious thoughts about the future. Many and great as have been the discouragements which I have had to pass through, from within and from without, I can yet bear my testimony to the reality of the gift, and to the tender mercy and all-sufficiency of the power of Him who, when he sees meet, can make use of the most feeble instruments in his service. I can hardly do otherwise than encourage others to be faithful, keeping a single eye to our

Lord, watching against imaginations and the delusions of our own forming, or of our spiritual enemy. In every act of submission and of dedication, fear not! If the Lord be with us, if He be our God, we need never be dismayed."

Referring to Priscilla Gurney's increased indisposition, her brother Buxton writes at this time—

As for my dearest Priscilla, I neither grieve with the bad account of yesterday, nor rejoice with the more favourable one of to-day. I feel her given to the Lord, and I am sure He is about her bed, and that He loves her, and that whatsoever shall happen to her shall be sent in peculiar tenderness; and in these certain truths I commit her to Him without fear or repining. She is inexpressibly dear to my inmost soul; but I look upon her as a saint already in the hands of the Lord, and as He is managing for her I cannot venture to wish for anything, except the thing, whatever it may be, that He may ordain. I am satisfied and joyful in her state, and can with unbounded confidence commit her to the Lord, and shall be almost glad if you tell her I send no message of hope or fear, neither can I hope nor fear.

Her beloved brother J. J. Gurney writes of a visit to his precious sister, to whom he had been united, not only in the bond of nearest kindredship, but also in the sacred fellowship of religious communion. He says:—

Dearest Priscilla's state is increasingly consoling. She has felt, thought, acted, and known, as much as many, and sustained the great cause of truth and righteousness. Now all is hushed, brought into rest and stillness—and her soul is like that of a weaned child. Sweet and joyful have been my feelings whilst I have sat by her bedside, and warm my praises—*not of her*, but of Him who has redeemed her with his blood.

TO E. R., A BELOVED FRIEND AT FAKENHAM, WHO HAD TENDERLY NURSED HER.

(Supposed to be the last letter written by Priscilla Gurney.)

Cromer Hall, First-day, First Month 28th, 1821.

I wish to thank thee, my dearest Emma, for thy love and kindness to me, not only during my illness, but from the commencement of our friendship. I have often been surprised at the constancy and stability of thy friendship for me, feeling but little in myself, or in my conduct, that has deserved it. A constant faithful friend is, however, of no small value, and of late, excluded as I have been from many whom I love, I am not insensible to those things which are of true value. I am perhaps prompted to make one more attempt at expression of my love and interest for thee and thy dear husband, by the effects of a singular dream, which I had the other night. I thought I was going off on a long journey, and had parted from everybody, when thy image presented itself strongly before me: nothing could exceed thy kindness or readiness to help me to pack up and go, but that I could not receive any help, and chose to pack up for myself, (how drolly descriptive of our two selves, was it not?) and yet, all the while, I felt so united to thee in love, and was uneasy afterwards, because I was afraid I had hurt thee, and had not taken a satisfactory leave of thee and thy dear husband. Therefore, my beloved friends, as this long journey may not be very remote from me (not that I am inclined to be superstitious on the subject) I am the more easy to bid you affectionately farewell! and to express my very sincere desire that you may prosper on your way Zionwards; for if we are not travelling this road, what end or resting-place can we any of us look for? Oh, that you may then, and your children, be led to walk patiently, constantly, firmly, and faithfully in the way everlasting! I have lately been brought very

low, but my state is fluctuating, and I wish not to speculate upon it. It is a wonderful mercy to be kept in a measure of tranquillity of mind, and to be spared from greater suffering. If I have not the active help of my friends, I trust and believe I have their watchfulness and prayers: these are what I most need. Do not give way to too much feeling about me: my motto often is, and I recommend it to thee, "Remember, oh my soul, the quietude of those in whom Christ governs, and in all thou dost, feel after it!" Love to all your family circle.

Thine, &c.,

PRISCILLA GURNEY.

We proceed with her sister's narrative.

"*January*" 19*th*.—Priscilla has been very increasingly ill, obliged to give up work and nearly all writing and reading to herself. Interesting conversation with her in the morning on her place in the church, in heaven especially. She expressed her own view that there are different stations in the church, some to more honour, some to less; that she was sensible she was fitted and intended for a low place, but she was *perfectly* willing to *keep* a low place; that it was almost presumptuous to talk of what place we might be found to fill in the church above. What a *favour* to be admitted at all into it! She often thought of the parable of the man coming in and taking a high seat. She was entirely convinced that we could not be happy in spiritual or temporal things till we were made *really willing* to take the *lowest* seat. I expressed my firm belief that, as one star differeth from another star in glory, she would be one of chief magnitude. This grieved her: she thought it had been an inexpressible blessing to have been kept in this evil world from great sins, and to have been preserved in a measure from evil. She was most thankful and sensible of the mercies in every way bestowed upon her; but yet continued to express a deep sense of the lowness of her state. I spoke of the uncommon gifts and,

graces which she had received. She replied, "I am quite convinced that gifts are no proofs of the life of the soul. We do not live by gifts; and I am thankful that my ministry is so much taken from me, to shew me how little the life of religion in my soul depends upon it; and also how entirely the work is out of myself."

Her sister L. Hoare's diary supplies some farther particulars of this interesting illness:—

"*February*" 12*th*.—After hearing the forty-second Psalm, she said a few words of thanksgiving,—"I thank thee, O Lord! that through our great weakness and manifold infirmities we can say, "Hitherto thou hast helped us;" and we pray thee, whatsoever state we may have to pass through, we may find the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ sufficient for us."

When I told her that F. and R. C. had arrived (from Switzerland), she said, "That is a comfort." Their introduction to the room was easy and comforting. When she could speak, holding the hand of each of them, she said she hoped the presence of God had come with them; it was a great comfort to her to see them. I thought she shed tears, which have been very rare with her through all her illness.

14*th*.—Priscilla wished F. to sit and read with us: he read the thirteenth of John. She said, when it was done, "It is so comforting, I should like the next chapter." He read the fourteenth. P. afterwards said to me, "It has been a delightful reading; I don't know when I have felt so comforted." Something of happiness prevailed over our sick room, and our dearest patient was strikingly serene, comfortable and easy. In the evening she was very sinking: she wished us all to meet in her room: we sat in silence. She prayed, "Grant, O Lord, that thy poor unworthy servant may so see, and feel, and experience thy great salvation, that she may depart in peace." "Tell them," she said to her sister Buxton, "tell them all to watch with me."

Priscilla received at this time the following letters from W. Wilberforce and William Allen:—

Kensington Gore, 15th February, 1821.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

For so I trust you will allow me to style you; I have long been indulging myself in the speculation of writing you a few lines for the purpose of assuring you of the friendly interest I take in all that concerns you, and as this feeling is that of enlightened, I may humbly hope, as well as of true friendship, it renders me most interested in that which is most important to you. I should rejoice indeed to hear that it had pleased our Heavenly Father so far to bless the means that are used for the recovery of your health as to enliven us with the hope of your complete restoration to your former mediocrity of bodily strength, a degree which would enable you to be again active in your Master's service; but if this intelligence be denied me, I should not speak the truth if I were to say I am much distressed; in fact, my mind seems rather to be raised to a higher elevation, to be warmed with a more animating hope, and to be enabled to see you walking, in whatever direction it may be, under the guidance and support of that merciful Shepherd who carries his lambs in his arms, and who will never leave you nor forsake you. Oh, my dear friend, what prospects open on our view, when we look in this direction—a world of love and peace and joy, and mutual confidence and unclouded affection! "We shall be like Him," says the apostle, "for we shall see Him as He is!" May we be enabled more and more to live under the power of this blessed truth. Meanwhile, you, I am persuaded, will not forget the beautiful simplicity and christian force of that delightful passage in Milton's sonnet on his own blindness,—

"They also serve who only stand and wait."

In truth, this is the more difficult service to be performed with

full acquiescence of will, and confidence of hope and love; yet from what I have heard from our dear friend F. Buxton, I trust you are enabled to manifest your achievement of this *harder* task of christian duty. My dear friend, may the same Everlasting Arms continue to sustain you; and if we never meet again in this world, may we meet where we shall love each other still more than we do now, and shall be able to look forward to an eternity of holiness and happiness, of the sweets of friendship, heightened by a keener relish, and augmented by our common enjoyment of those pleasures which, through the infinite mercy and goodness of Him who sent his Son into the world to save sinners, and of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, we shall enjoy at God's right hand for evermore. May the best blessing of heaven be your's, now and for ever, so wishes and prays,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

W. W.

WILLIAM ALLEN TO PRISCILLA GURNEY.

Plough Court, Second Month 13th, 1821.

SISTER, BELOVED IN THE LORD,

Thy precious, innocent spirit feels very near to me, in the fellowship of the gospel of our dear Redeemer, who, "having loved his own who were in the world, loved them unto the end." My heart glows with the belief, that thou art one of those whom He hath loved, and still loves, who He *wills* should be with Him, *where He is*, even in His glory. Take courage, then, dear heart, and though thou wilt feel the flesh to be weak, and though the enemy may yet for a short season attempt to create dismay, yet as thy soul continues to be deeply anchored in God, thou wilt know the accuser of the brethren to be cast down for ever. Let faith and patience, then, have their perfect work, recline upon the breast of thy beloved, cast all thy cares upon Him, for He careth for thee, and I firmly believe that when the frail tabernacle breaks down, thy precious immortal spirit will

be presented before thy Redeemer's throne of glory with exceeding joy. Farewell, farewell in the Lord! and if thou shouldst be enabled, pray that thy poor weak brother may also be preserved to the end.

Believe him ever affectionately thine,

WILLIAM ALLEN.

Rachel's journal proceeds as follows:—

"*February*" 21*st*.—P. wished us all to meet in her room. F. read a part of Revelation, only a few verses, and prayed. Dearest Priscilla said in prayer, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty;" and may we be enabled humbly to acknowledge that "Just and true are all thy ways, thou King of Saints." She wished F. to leave the chair next to her, that her sister Louisa Hoare might take it, and repeat aloud what she said, as follows:—"I wish to express the longing desire and prayer of my heart, that the best of blessings may be with you all, individually and collectively; that all you have done for me —all your kindness—may be rewarded; and that whether our time here be long or short, we may *all of us* be good, faithful, and valiant soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ unto the end; and I much more especially express my desire that this blessing may be with dearest Fowell and Hannah."

22*nd*.—We read one of Thorpe's interesting letters. P. sent her love and messages to several. When on the bed she prayed, "Enable me, O Lord, to cast myself wholly, unreservedly, and humbly on thy love; and grant, that although now I see thee not, yet believing, I may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory!" Quiet assembly of us all in her room in the evening. F. C. read, at her desire, the hymn on the death of a believer, and that on the death of Stephen.

23*rd*.—We met together as usual in her room. F. C. read the thirty-fourth Psalm. She afterwards desired me to say, "Though there is nothing said on the present occasion, how much I hope that, through the power of the Redeemer present

with us, we may experience what is conveyed by this text, 'Be still, and know that I am God.'"

24*th.*—J. J. G. read in her room, passages in Isaiah and Revelation, and spake of the beautiful condition of the departed saints,—of those who were written in the Lamb's book of life. Dearest Priscilla said to him, "Tell everybody (all our circle) how much it is my desire that we may possess our souls in patience."

27*th.*—Mr. D.* came. Dearest Priscilla took him most affectionately by the hand as he was sitting by her, and said, "I feel a strong interest in thee, and an earnest desire that thou mayest be made a partaker of the hope and consolation of the gospel." Mr. D. checked her, and said he could not allow her to speak and hurt herself on his account. When he arose to take leave she said, "I desire a blessing may be with thee: it cannot hurt me to say this."

"*March*" 3*rd.*—We read and sat in her room. In the evening she was moved into the arm-chair, the six sisters surrounding her. She appeared in some distress, but soon repeated these words, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me;" asking for the conclusion of the verse. She said to H., "What a comfort to have such attendance!" I think she said, some days ago, there was nothing for which she could desire so much to recover, as to pay more attention to the sick.

4*th.*—She said to F. C., "One thing I have learned, and I wish thee to feel and remember it—that all suffering is short. The time for trial and suffering is but for a moment. Let us have patience while it lasts. Do remember this." To P. B. she said, how very much she hoped she would cultivate the blessed habit of patience and forbearance under little difficulties.

6*th.*—On giving her some medicine, when very low, she paused and said, "Now when my flesh and my heart fail, do thou be the strength of my life, and my portion for ever."

8*th.*—When Fowell had carried Priscilla to bed, she stopped

* Her medical attendant.

him. She wanted to speak to him. Her cough prevented her for some time. Then she said, "Oh the sufferings of the slaves!"

10*th.*—J. J. G. came. He sat by her, and she asked him where that text was, "They that walk in darkness and have no light, let them trust in the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God." She seemed low and ill. She said, "I wish to know if I have anything more to do."

Third Month 11*th.*—Elizabeth J. Fry records:—

Dearest Priscilla said to this effect, that the experience of her illness had greatly confirmed and deepened her in the foundation and principles of Friends, more particularly as it respected the *ministry*. . . . . She expressed how entirely she felt her dependence *on the Lord alone*, and how little she felt the want of outward ministry; though what came in the *life* was refreshing and sweet. She also expressed, this morning, a great desire for the *Friends* of the family, that they might *hold fast their principles.*

12*th.*—Our dearest Priscilla is brought to the lowest and most tried state of body; yet she expresses that the Lord manifests his power to be sufficient to keep and sustain her in this time of her great need. She has said that, through all her sufferings and her low estate, she is enabled to cleave fast to the *cross*. She told E. F. that she *trusted* that she should not be utterly cast down, and yesterday morning expressed an earnest desire and prayer that she might be enabled in everything to give thanks, and she quoted part of the 10th verse of the 50th of Isaiah. It is beautiful to see her entire submission to the will of the Lord in *everything*. It is so evident to what hand she wholly yields herself: her faith, her hope, her trust, and her patience never fail. I heard her to-day pray over something she was taking, "I desire to be thankful for all the mercies mingled in the cup of suffering. Thy mercies are many indeed." And after asking who was to sit up with her, she

paused, and then said, "Dearest Lord, grant thy blessing upon this night, and give me thy help." She prayed that the Lord would be with her in her deep distress, and that the deliverance from it might be in his own time. "In thy own time, Lord."

16*th*.—We thought yesterday the lowest day that has yet been passed through. In this suffering state she said to R. that the Lord was still sufficient for her. E. F. ministered to her from the 40th Psalm, "Make no tarrying, oh my God: be thou our help, and deliverer." Priscilla said, "Amen."

19*th*.—She desired messages of great love and interest to several relatives. She said to E. F. that having nearly lost the use of her speech made her feel the exceeding importance of the government of the tongue in health.

25*th*.—Our dearest Priscilla has sunk during the past week into the arms of death. Her powers of body have been escaping her: she has been scarcely able to speak, and, when she could, has been heard with difficulty. She has much liked our reading to her, several times in the day, in the Bible or hymns, also Samuel Scott's Diary, John Richardson's Journal, and, for a change, the history of the various Moravian missionary stations. Though she has appeared so death-like, we have found the powers of her mind surprisingly alive. On Friday morning we moved her on to the couch, which she left no more. We endeavoured to get her to-bed at night; but finding her much exhausted by the attempt, I asked her to hold up her hand if she preferred remaining on the couch, which she did. The appearance of approaching death increased so much that we all assembled round her. Her speech was gone, and she had entered the valley of the shadow of death. The night was deeply serious and awful; yet she revived sufficiently for us to have interesting communication with her during yesterday, and the effect of her spirit upon us was delightful, though in silence and death. She made us understand we were to read, by pointing to C. and making signs: 13th of Corinthians was chosen. Fowell, after reading, spoke very forcibly of the security

of the love of God towards her, that though she might, through great weakness and illness, lose the sense and knowledge of it herself, yet his love was unmeasurable, unutterable, and that neither life nor death, neither principalities nor powers, nor any other creature, could separate her from his love: that it depended not on our sense of it; that nothing in us could shake it, and that he did feel most strongly and powerfully that she was in the hands of the God of love. She held his hand, and by feeble squeezes indicated her satisfaction in what he said. Her voice had wholly failed her, and the power of articulation was almost entirely gone. Her power of moving or expressing herself by action was almost as much gone as utterance; but we could gather her mind and discover she was trying to express something. It was evident to me that she attempted to say "Farewell" to Fowell, of whom she wished to take leave. As the evening advanced, the appearance of approaching death decidedly increased. We assembled round her. I was sitting holding her hand, the others about us. She fixed her half-opened eyes upon me, and many times whispered inarticulately, "Farewell." She was still seen making efforts to speak, when I heard quite evidently, "Farewell to you all." She looked up to Rachel, and again comparatively audibly uttered, "Farewell," with quite a heavenly look, and I believe she said, "My love is with you," and was moving her lips for some time. We discovered her saying, "O Lord!" She was, no doubt, in prayer—we thought for us. And here she feebly moved her hand and arm to take our's, and F. thought made a movement with her face for *me* to kiss her. This I observed twice or thrice, and an evident decided *smile*, such as it had been long since I had seen. E. J. Fry was then empowered (it was, indeed, with a power and demonstration of the Spirit) to hold forth to her the most lively encouragement, to lift up her head in the strength of the Lord, to assure her soul before Him, that He would carry her above the waves of Jordan. And she added something to this effect:—"If I saw with my eyes the

glorious things prepared for thee, I could not be more sure of them them than now I am." Soon after this she fell asleep, which became more and more the sleep of death. Several sat up all night. We were summoned into the room after family reading in the morning, and all assembled round her. We trembled whilst watching whether each would be the last breath. J. J. G. said, "Lord Jesus, receive her spirit,"—when she ceased to breathe. E. Fry repeated the same in a prayer of thanksgiving. Catherine quoted that verse, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

She was a most precious, tenderly beloved sister! How have we seen *her soul live in strength* through the decay of the body!

The closing scene to which this most interesting recital has conducted the reader, occurred on the 25th of Third Month, 1821. Very solemn and animating is the contemplation of such a blessed victory over the power of sin and sorrow. How gently did the angel of death lay his hand upon her, shielding her from the extremes of nature's agony! And how shall finite thought conceive, or mortal utterance describe, the ineffable and perfect bliss and glory that awaited her ransomed and happy spirit? But to the divinely anointed vision of frail and feeble pilgrims yet waiting on the wilderness side of Jordan, *some glimpses* are at times afforded of the riches of this perfect bliss and glory, and in the ear of faith a celestial voice announces, "*All are yours; for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.*"

One of the sisters gives a very touching description of the funeral, which took place on the 31st. "There was," she says,—

A blessed sense of the Divine providence and support through every part of it. J. J. G. and E. F. both prayed at the

grave, and both in a strain of praise and thanksgiving for the mercies that had been vouchsafed to Priscilla in her life and in her death. J. J. G. gave thanks that she had been redeemed from this present evil world; that, through the everlasting love of God, she had been made ready, sanctified, and prepared for the inheritance incorruptible; that her conflicts and her trials had, through the mercy of her God, been made subservient to the great end of working out her salvation, and that she was amongst that blessed number whose robes had been washed white in the blood of the Lamb! E. J. F. alluded to the shortness of her time here on earth, to some of the heavy and sorrowful steps of her pilgrimage: "Thou leddest her in the wilderness, in a solitary way, where she found no city to dwell in. Yet thou didst sustain, comfort, and bless her, and in thy own appointed time thou hast led her to a city of habitation." At the meeting, my uncle Joseph Gurney bore his testimony to her upright and holy course of life, to the glory and beauty of that principle of faith in Christ which had led her in the way of the cross, which had kept her in an humble and self-denying path, but one in which she had been enabled to glorify the God whom she had served. Those to whom she had shown many kindnesses, to whose wants she had administered, to whom she had been the means of imparting spiritual instruction and consolation, who had beheld the sweetness of her countenance, and had blessed her, were earnestly invited to make themselves acquainted with the principles of Gospel love, of that living faith in Christ, of that grace shed abroad in the heart, which had led to such abundant fruit in her whose loss we then deplored.

An extract from some reminiscences of the character of Priscilla Gurney, penned by her sister Rachel Gurney, may prove an appropriate conclusion to the foregoing memoir:—

The principles of conduct in Priscilla, that were particularly

brought to my observation, were these:—1st. Her anxious desire to employ time well. 2nd. Her vigilant attention to the poor and the sick. 3rd. Her lively interest in the education of the youth of all classes, and more especially in the religious instruction given them: a cause which she had most deeply at heart. Her frequent calls from home, both of a religious and domestic nature, made it difficult to pursue any object with regularity; but her perseverance in overcoming these obstacles rendered her unusually skilful in the economy of time, through almost every variety of circumstances. There was, in her, the ever-open eye to watch and discern the leadings of Providence, even in the minuter occurrences of the day, and a most discriminating perception of the duties that were involved in them, and in nothing was this more displayed than in her equal fitness for the passive graces or the active virtues, as either the one or the other might be required of her. This happy combination of the principles of true diligence with a nice judgment in their application, was discernible in every stage of her illness, during which period, her exertions were adapted to her power of making them, with wonderful exactness and perseverance. The labours of love, which had occupied so great a portion of her life, were still ever ready to be extended to all within her reach; this was to be particularly observed to the children of our family circle, whom she treated with especial tenderness, and to the servants who waited upon her. The governing principle of religion was not only conspicuous in the economical arrangement of her time and her pursuits, but in the love of order and completeness, which so remarkably characterized all her undertakings. Her interest for the poor, and the sick amongst them, was habitual to her, and led to a vigilant care of them at all times, and wherever she might be placed. If she could not give them her own personal attention, she was very careful to stimulate others to the discharge of this duty. She did not consider that a short stay in any place exempted her from the necessity (when it

could be done) of ascertaining the state of the poor in it; but, on the contrary, it furnished her with motives for redoubled diligence in her attentions to them, that some good, if possible, might result to the neighbourhood where such accidental visits were paid. Towards the sick, especially, her tender sympathies were drawn forth, and she considered it one of the most important obligations of christian charity to have them diligently sought out, that assiduous care should be taken to mitigate their sufferings and to minister to their comfort. She thought an association for the benefit of the sick was also particularly desirable, as affording a permanent source of relief for them, but where this could not be effected, she was most anxious that there should be, at least, a supply of linen and other necessaries in readiness to be lent out to them. She was greatly interested in the establishment of Bible associations generally, being the most ready and effectual method of supplying the Scriptures, and of exciting their desire to possess them. In schools of every kind she felt much interested, but especially in Sunday-schools; as being, under careful superintendence, one of the finest means of diffusing the knowledge of religious principles. At some periods of her life, she was very diligent in visiting our own schools and those in the neighbourhood, with the express design of examining and promoting the scriptural instruction of the children; in this work, her grand aim was, to instil into their minds the principles of Christian conduct in connexion with the doctrinal truths of Scripture; thus preparing them to comprehend the obligation of the "two great commandments" on which "hang all the law and the prophets." She was strongly persuaded that the principle of christian charity was very inadequately cultivated in its various branches even by sincere Christians, and she thought that to imbue the minds of children with its beauty and excellence, was, with the blessing of God, one great means of increasing peace on earth and goodwill towards men. She was deeply solicitous that, in the Society of Friends, the young people

should be well versed in the Scriptures. In all her intercourse with the poor, it was her endeavour to exercise great caution in administering to their relief, that no undue dependence on their part might be begotten by it; on the contrary, she wished to help them in a way that should stimulate their own industry and independence as much as possible. With this view, she frequently assisted those who were the most diligent labourers, and she took great pleasure in encouraging young people to make useful exertions, and to perform acts of kindness, by uniting timely presents and rewards to the exhortations and instructions which she gave them. She went much to the cottages of the poor, and sought opportunities of reading the Scriptures, and other religious communion with them, as the way might open. She thought that the most important service that could be rendered to the sick, was by frequent visits to them, and by inducing their neighbours to attend upon and watch over them. In concluding these subjects—of her charities to the poor and her interest in the religious instruction of young people—it may be as well to add that she was very conscientious in the expenditure of money; though perfectly liberal in all reasonable expenses, she studiously endeavoured to avoid all superfluities of every kind that should curtail her means of assisting others, or of supporting objects that she conceived to be generally beneficial. Her forbearance and wisdom were conspicuous in her conduct towards those from whom she differed in opinion, and her great caution to avoid giving pain to others was habitual to her, even in the minor matters of taste and inclination; yet this care was united to a faithful desire that no considerations for the feelings of others should interfere with the discharge of those religious duties to which she apprehended she was called, and which were frequently rendered more difficult to her by the narrow and solitary path that they occasionally led her into. In mixed societies she might be said to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour, and to wear the ornament, spoken of by the Apostle,

"of a meek and quiet spirit." Her active and almost anxious benevolence made her so much alive to every description of persons with whom she associated, that none were indifferent to her; this was a talent used to good purpose, and one that, under the government of religion, gave peculiar tenderness and efficacy to her ministry, especially when exercised towards individuals; her ready discernment of character also, aided her in adapting the administration of her gifts and graces to the necessities of others, and the sweetness of her countenance, together with the peculiar refinement of her manners, gave her access to all classes, by whom she was loved and revered in no common degree. Her calling to the ministry was exercised by her in deep self-humiliation, and in subjection to what she conceived to be the authority of scripture on the subject; in this work, it was her endeavour to follow implicitly the guidance of the Spirit by which she felt she had been constrained to enter upon it. In her public services she was governed by the discipline of the body of Christians to whom she belonged, and by whom she was acknowledged as a minister, gifted and prepared for the work allotted her. It was not only in this character, but in her whole conduct, she exhibited a beautiful example of the efficacy of the principle which she advocated, and which is so prominently upheld by the Society of Friends, —that of the immediate direction and sensible influence of God's Spirit over the hearts and minds of true Christians.

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